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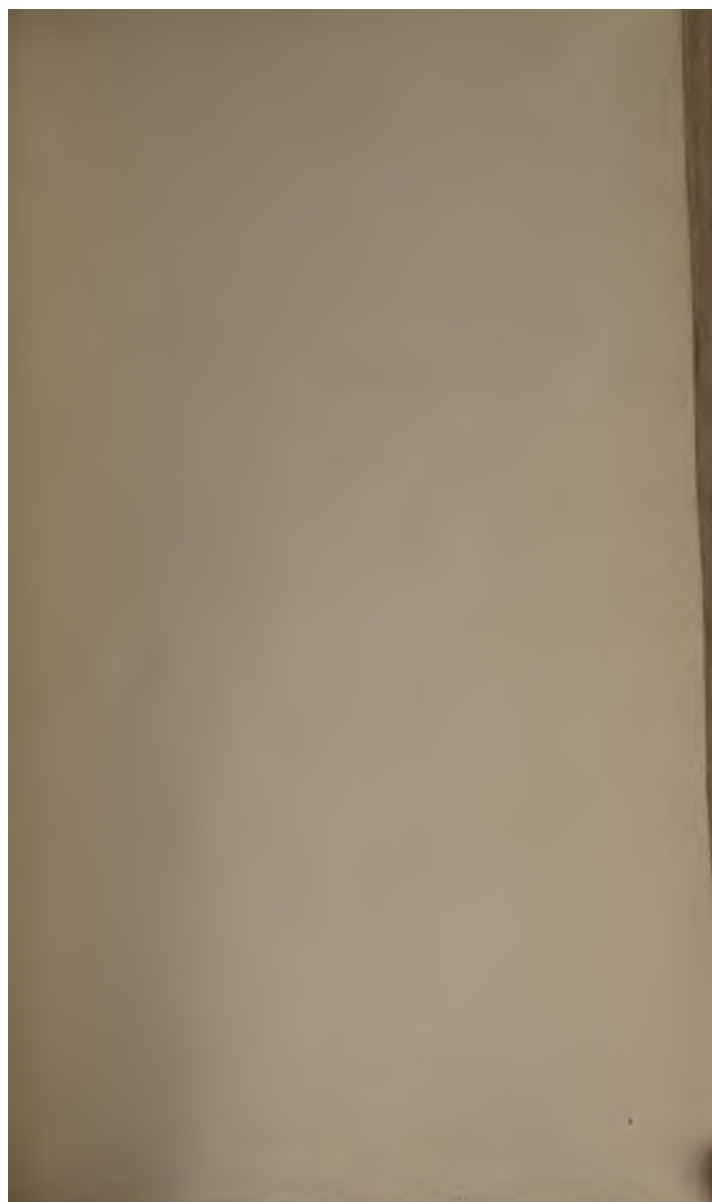
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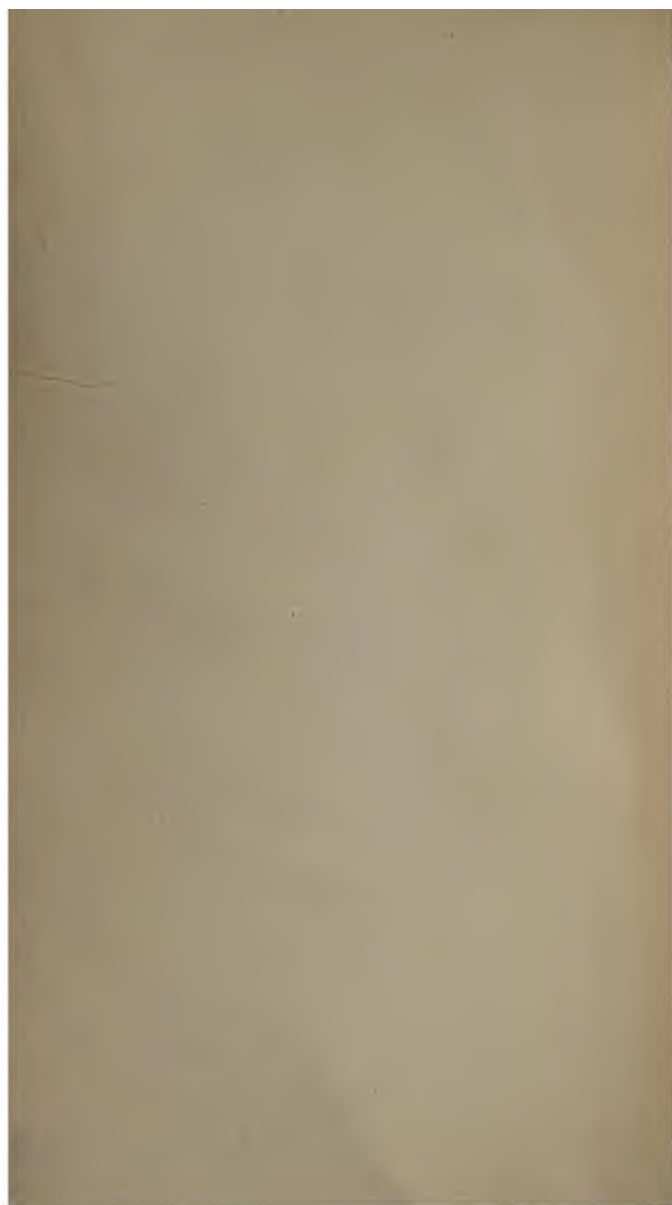
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THE
DISCARDED SON;
OR,
HAUNT OF THE BANDITTI.
A Tale.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY REGINA MARIA ROCHE,
AUTHOR OF THE CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY, &c.

Thou hast been
As one in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man who Fortune's buffets and rewards
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are they
Whose blood and judgment mingled are so well,
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger,
To sound what stop she please.

SHAKESPEARE.

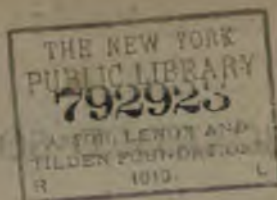
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THE DISCARDED SON.

CHAP. I.

** Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night,
The time of night when Troy was set on fire;
The time when screech-owls cry and ban dogs howl;
When spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves;
That time best fits the work we have in hand.**

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Marchesa now made a proposal to Osmond that was truly agreeable, namely, as the attendance of a valet could not be dispensed with by him, to take Mac-talla into his service, who, notwithstanding his sincere attachment to her family, wished to extend his rambles beyond her domain; and had besides conceived such a partiality for him, he having been the servant appointed to wait on him, that he felt solicitous to continue in that situation.

This matter being arranged to the satisfaction of all parties, Osmond next availed himself of an opportunity that just at this juncture occurred of writing to England. His letter was long and explanatory. After entreating no time might be lost in writing to the different places where there was a chance of Delacour's touching on his return to Europe, he expressed his hopes of his parents having no objection to joining him as soon as possible in Italy, where every thing that filial love and duty could dictate for their happiness should be done by him.

The Count, as the most likely method he thought he could have recourse to for the purpose, endeavoured to induce him to protract his stay at Acerenza, by assuring him he was positive, if he prolonged it, they should yet be able to discover who the fair stranger was. Osmond, however, remained inexorable to his entreaties; but at the

same time promised not only to visit him speedily but often, should he have it in his power.

At an early hour one morning, ere yet the mists and exhalations of early day had disappeared, Osmond, having previously the preceding night taken a most affectionate leave of his noble and generous friends, quitted their hospitable mansion on horseback, which mode of travelling would better than any other, he conceived, enable him to gratify his curiosity with regard to the scenery he should travel through; and attended, besides his valet Mactalla, by a little French boy, the son of a deceased servant of the Marchesa's, for the purpose of guiding a sumpter mule, the road between the castle and Naples being extremely bare of accommodation for travellers.

The Count gave him an introductory letter to the Duke D'Amalfi, and tried to force a pecuniary obligation on him; but to no purpose....the manner in which he meant to prosecute his journey, united to the circumstance of his having received his purse back again from the pirate undiminished in its contents, making Osmond conceive it absolutely unnecessary for him to incur one of the kind.

The Count, however, differing in opinion from him, and finding it impossible to prevail on him to do what he wished, privately dispatched a messenger with a letter to the Duke D'Amalfi, two days preceding his departure, in which, after expatiating on the too scrupulous delicacy of Osmond with regard to pecuniary matters, he entreated his excellency to have the goodness to appropriate the sum of twelve hundred pounds, for which he enclosed him an order on his banker in Naples, to the use of Osmond, in such a way as should induce him to believe it was the produce of whatever situation he might be appointed to.

With a heavy heart Osmond quitted the castle of Acerenza. Next to his own immediate connexions, there were none for whom he entertained so high a regard as the amiable family he had parted from. He *would indeed have considered himself ungrateful in the extreme, if he had not felt the parting with such friends,*

after the innumerable proofs of esteem and affection he had received from them.

Gradually, however, in all probability, the sadness of his spirits would have yielded to the pleasing hopes he entertained of enjoying, and that at no very distant period, perhaps, again their society, but for the despair he felt of ever more beholding Miss Raymond, whose idea, an involuntary retrospect at the moment he was quitting it, of the hours he had passed at the castle, had awakened in his mind.

As much as possible, however, he strove to banish the feelings this idea gave birth to; and at length the numerous objects of grandeur and beauty that, as the dawn brightened, swelled on his sight, began to second the efforts he made for the purpose.

The sun was just beginning to gild its stately towers, when he paused to indulge himself with another and a last view of the castle of Acerenza. As he gazed upon its green groves and forests, gently agitated by the breath of morning, and resounding with the warblings of innumerable birds.... 'Delightful shades!' he involuntarily and mentally exclaimed, his heart swelling with gratitude and tenderness at the recollections they revived, 'ever may you continue as now, the bowers of innocence and peace....ever may the illustrious owners of the noble pile you shadow....that mansion where the houseless child of want sues not in vain for admission,...where the stranger finds a ready refuge....ever may they continue in possession of the happiness they so eminently merit.'

Then with a lingering adieu to all the beloved and enchanting haunts in which he had passed so many delightful hours, he rode on. For some time nothing could be more agreeable than his journey....the road, for a considerable way after leaving the castle, gently sloping and winding amongst cliffs covered with aromatic plants and flowers, and tufted with the most beautiful and fragrant shrubs, the exquisite sweetness of which was diffused around by a light breeze that swept over the cliffs; but as the sun ascended in the horizon, this by degrees dying away, the heat became intense, and the swarming insects that buzzed around troublesome in the extreme.

After a long endurance of both, Osmond and his companions at length alighted, and turning their horses to feed, sought refuge themselves amidst the embowering shades, that almost in every direction met the view ; and here Osmond could not but admire the provident care of nature, who, as if aware of the necessity there was for shelter in such a climate, had, with a profuse hand, scattered trees and shrubs around, the thickly interwoven foliage of which denied admission to the sunbeams that had brought them to perfection, like to favourites, as Shakespeare beautifully says,

* Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against the power that bred it.*

Osmond having taken possession of a delightfully situated arbour, composed of orange, spiry myrtle, and lemon, surrounded by tufts of almond-trees, with a beautiful grove in the rear, and a fine meadow in front, still moist and verdant, notwithstanding the vertical sun that darted on it, in consequence of a fine clear rivulet that meandered through the soil to a distant pile of rocks, down which it fell, checking and preventing the sweets of the surrounding blossoms from being too potent, a basket of provisions was unpacked for his breakfast.

Completely screened in his enbowered retreat from the sun, he enjoyed the contemplation of the effect it produced around. Flocks and herds were seen in every direction languidly ruminating in the shade ; and shepherds stretched beneath the expansive boughs of chesnut-trees, enjoying their leafy covert with a degree of luxurious indulgence peculiar to the Italians, and for which they are remarked for enjoying the serenity and genial warmth of their climate.

As soon as they had breakfasted, Mactalla and the French boy lay down to repose ; but the mind of Osmond was too busily employed in reviewing the past and anticipating the future, to permit him to follow their example. Absorbed in reflection, he literally took no note of time, till the awaking of Mactalla, when, looking at his watch, he found the sultry hours of noon were over, and *that if they wished to get in at an early hour to the place where they were to rest for the night, and which, from*

the lonesomeness of the roads, he understood it was essential to their safety to do, they had no further time to lose.

Accordingly, he quickly remounted, and soon after found himself in a road bounded on one side by a river, and on the other by apparently impenetrable woods; on the opposite side of the river, and extending along it, rose stupendous mountains, many of them covered with awful forests of pine and larch, and others interspersed and rendered rugged with rocks and precipices, in many places projecting far, and glooming upon the water beneath.

The sun by this time sinking in the west, threw a warm glow over this wild tract, a crimson tint upon its rocks and jutting cliffs, that heightened in sublimity; to which the richly coloured clouds that lightly floated over it, transiently veiling the bright azure of the heavens, added not a little. Altogether it was a scene calculated to awaken the enthusiasm of a devotee of Nature's: and by degrees the feeling it inspired Osmond with, so completely absorbed him, as to interrupt the conviction which he had from time to time carried on in the course of the day with his attendant Mactalla, whom he found at once intelligent and entertaining, and well acquainted with the road they were travelling.

But soon the attention of Osmond became entirely engrossed by a village at the foot of the mountains, and characterized by an air of the most chilling desolation. Nothing animate was visible either in or about it, and up to the very doors of the houses the paths were choaked with weeds and grass.

'Ah Signor,' cried Mactalla, gently riding up to him, on perceiving the earnestness with which he regarded this dreary spot, 'I see you are surprised by the stillness and loneliness of that place,' pointing across the water with his whip.

'I am indeed,' replied Osmond; 'pray to what may that stillness and loneliness be owing?'

'Faith, Signor, to a very sufficient cause....to its having no inhabitants.'

‘No inhabitants!’ in accents of surprise, repeated his master.

‘That I know of,’ rejoined Mactalla, ‘except it be a stray sheep or a goat from the mountains.’

‘It appears to be a beautiful spot,’ said Osmond, elevating his eyes from its neat cottages, many of them mantled over with roses and honeysuckles, literally destined to waste their sweetness on the desert air, and detached from one another by clumps of shadowing trees to the thickly-wooded heights that towered sublimely above it.

‘And was once well peopled. Ah many and many is the merry hour I have passed in it.’

‘Indeed!’ And pray to what circumstance is its present desertion owing?’

Mactalla shrugged his shoulders.... ‘Ah Signor, to a melancholy one. Do you perceive that tomb of black marble,’ again pointing with his whip across the river, ‘with cypresses overhanging it, and a greyish and pointed cliff rising like a pyramid above it?’ ‘I do,’ answered Osmond.

‘Well, Signor, that tomb, in the course of one day, received all the inhabitants of Tessino.’

‘Heavens! what a mortality must have prevailed amongst them!’ exclaimed Osmond.

‘A mortality! Ah Signor, but I’ll tell you all about it, if you have no objection to a melancholy story.’

‘Not the least, if you have none to tell one.’

‘Oh not the smallest; merry or sad ’tis all one to me. I used to keep the Marchesa’s people alive and merry with my stories.’

‘What! your dismal ones?’ asked Osmond, half smiling.

‘Yes, Signor; for a dismal one always led to a merry one: when I had lowered their spirits, the least I could do was to raise them again. I had always something pleasant to tell them of my own country, little Ireland; how the lads at the patterns there, after drinking lovingly together for hours, would sally forth to bang one another for nothing at all but the honour of the thing, and that of their different counties; and then, after

amusing themselves at this sport for half an hour or so return quietly to their booths, as good friends as ever with one another.'

'I see you have not forgotten your native country,' cried Osmond.

'No, Signor; my poor father was too fond of talking of it, to let me do so....but to the story I promised to tell you. About two years ago, the Marchesa Morati, and her husband the late Marchese, went to pay a visit to a friend residing among the most distant of the mountains on the opposite shore. Returning from this to their castle, they got benighted and bewildered amongst those tremendous ones, immediately in the neighbourhood of Tessino. Whilst endeavouring to regain their road, they fancied they heard dreadful shrieks mingling with the cold blast that blew around them....and the next morning proved they were not mistaken; for the first news they heard on rising was, that all the inhabitants of Tessino had been murdered the preceding night; and doubtless both they and their attendants would also have been dispatched, had they then been discovered in its neighbourhood, which, seeing that all the party were not perhaps too well prepared for a journey to the other world, might not have proved a very agreeable circumstance to the feelings of some of them.'

'Good heavens!' exclaimed Osmond, with horror in his look and accent, 'to what was so dreadful a catastrophe owing?'

'You shall hear, Signor. A lad of the name of Felisco, a native of Tessino, the son of a shepherd, and one himself, was employed by a wealthy farmer, residing amongst those mountains, to keep sheep for him. At no great distance from the place where his flock fed, was afforded Felisco of witnessing the depredations and savage acts of cruelty committed on travellers by a desperate gang of robbers, who found shelter in a forest hard by. At first he was terribly frightened whenever any of them came in his way, which was often the case; but at length, finding they never attempted to injure or molest him in any manner, he by degrees came to think no more

of them than if they had been so many of the innocent sheep he tended ; and at length suffered them to scrape a kind of acquaintance with him, but remained deaf to all the arguments they used, the Captain in particular....for Felisco was a stout active lad, and the rogue knew therefore would be an acquisition to his troop...to try and prevail on him to forsake his mean and tiresome employment of keeping sheep, as they chose to call it, and put himself in the way of obtaining fame and riches by joining them.

‘ It happened one morning that he and his master went to a neighbouring town to sell some sheep. A man, who had come thither to purchase provisions, was in consequence of his suspicious appearance, taken up and exposed to view in the market-place, and a large reward offered to any one who could prove whether or not he belonged to a troop of banditti in the neighbourhood, by whom the son of a man of considerable consequence and fortune had been lately murdered. Amongst the rest, Felisco took a peep at the stranger ; and notwithstanding his being disguised, instantly recognized in him his acquaintance, the captain of the robbers.

Doubtful how to act, he immediately took his master aside, and imparted the discovery to him, who, being a little more knowing than he was, hesitated not to take advantage of it, by directly going to a magistrate to identify the stranger, and thus secure the reward promised to the person who did so.

‘ That Felisco, however, had the best right to this was well known, which the magistrate at length learning, he insisted on its being divided with him ; and afterwards employed him as a guide to the troops that were sent out in quest of the rest of the banditti. With their grand retreat, however, Felisco was unacquainted ; but notwithstanding, several of them were taken through his means, and together with their leader, executed ; after which the magistrate, fearful that it would not be safe for him to remain in his old neighbourhood, sent him privately, and under his special protection, from it.

‘ The result proved his apprehensions well founded. *The survivors of the gang, after long searching for him,*

for the purpose, as one of them afterwards confessed, of revenging themselves on him, for the loss of so many brave comrades, came to the horrid resolution of destroying all his friends and relations in Tessino....a resolution which they carried into effect, descending from their hiding-places in the mountains to the village, at the dead hour of midnight, when all the poor inhabitants were buried in repose after the fatigues of the day.... Blessed St. Benedict! what horrid sights did it present the next morning! But I'll not shock you, Signor, by dwelling on these. Suffice it to say the remains of the poor massacred inhabitants were all quietly laid in one grave, and ever since the village of Tessino has been truly a deserted one. They say the houses are soon to be pulled down, and a monastery erected on their scite, by way of an asylum for travellers benighted amongst the desolate mountains in this quarter, and where daily prayers are to be offered up for the souls of those who so miserably perished. Considering the grandeur and loneliness of the situation, I don't think, Signor, a better could be fixed on for a religious edifice.'

To the justness of this observation Osmond assented by a slight inclination of his head: and now the sun disappearing from the horizon, the wavering woods, and rocks, and mountain tops, that long retained the ascending gloom, were beginning to be involved in the gloom of night....a gloom rendered more impressive by the terrific grandeur or rather wildness of the surrounding scenery; and a rising wind, that now howled dismally through the clefts of the mountains, now swept in hollow gusts over the tall forests that hung upon their sides.

'I am much mistaken,' cried Mactalla, after a short interval of silence, 'if a storm be not coming on. The clouds looked threatening as the sun disappeared; and see, Signor, how vainly the moon strives to make her appearance. I hope we may reach the place where we are to put up for the night before it begins; for it won't be the most agreeable thing in the world to be overtaken by one here. Ah, commend me to the roads of little Ireland, where, if a person be surprised by a storm, they have always a snug inn at hand to thrust their heads into.

Fine landscapes are fine things, but in my mind there's nothing so pleasant to a weary traveller as a cosy little parlour, with plenty of provisions."

"Did you ever hear more of the innocent occasion of the dreadful catastrophe you have been relating to me?" asked Osmond, still too much occupied in reflecting on it, to attend to the observations he was making.

"No, Signor, though I have frequently inquired for him. We were very intimate; indeed I may say a kind of friendship subsisted between us. Some people blame him for what he did: for my part I say nothing....only that I think he had better not have made himself so busy; for as a shaking water that has a foul bottom only renders it muddy, so disturbing such folks only renders them more mischievous."

"Nay, my friend, 'tis a duty we owe to society to bring wickedness to punishment whenever we have the power. He that would neglect to avail himself of an opportunity to do so, would justly be considered in the light of an accessory to the crimes of those he thus suffered to escape."

"I stand corrected, Signor," returned Mactalla, in accents of submission.

Osmond now inquired whether they were still far distant from the hamlet where they purposed resting for the night?

"As it is now too dark for me to see about me," replied Mactalla, "if I knew how many miles we had come, I could resolve that question. Pray, Signor, is it possible to calculate distance by time?"

"Certainly," answered his master.

"May it please you then, Signor, to make up the number of miles you think we have come, from three o'clock this morning down to the present hour, which I take to be about ten, from the time that has elapsed since we heard a vesper bell?"

"We had much better push on than waste time in trying to calculate how far we have come; for I now perfectly agree with you in thinking that a storm is at hand."

They accordingly pushed forward, but, to their great vexation, were almost every five minutes obliged to slack-

en their speed, owing to the little French boy, who in vain tried to make his mule keep up with their horses, perpetually exclaiming under the terrifying apprehension of being left behind, '*Au voleur ! au voleur ! au voleur !*' an exclamation that, notwithstanding Mactalla's solicitations to the contrary, Osmond could not avoid attending to.

'Long threatening comes at last,' cried Mactalla, on feeling some heavy drops of rain fall upon his face, accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning and tremendous bursts of thunder.

'We must get on as fast as we can,' said Osmond ; 'for I am pretty well convinced this storm will not soon be over.'

'Ah, you were right, Signor, to say as fast as we can, which by the Powers won't be very fast, for this beast (alluding to the mule, which, for some time past, he had been stationed by, in order to try and get it forward) is to the full as stubborn, I'll be sworn, as any of her generation ever were. By the Lord, I might just as well beat one of the trees as beat her.'

'Well, my friend,' cried Osmond, 'we must only have the greater patience.'

In a short time the storm became so violent, that it was utterly impossible for them to proceed. They accordingly alighted, and leading their affrighted horses, sought shelter from its violence at the entrance of a wood that skirted the road.

'By St. Benedict,' cried Mactalla, as they slowly made their way into it, and the blue lightning quivered round their heads, 'one might almost be tempted to think the end of the world at hand ; for such fire and brimstone as this was never, I believe, seen or smelt before : but courage,' he continued, on their arriving beneath the foliage of some tall and interwoven trees, matted together in wild luxuriance ; 'let me tell you, Signor, both man and beast might be worse off than here.'

The shelter they had obtained was, however, but partial. The rain fell in torrents, and was frequently blown in their faces by sudden squalls of wind, and which also bowed, with frightful violence, the trees around them ;

the tumultuous heavings of which, as agitated by the wind, now resembled the roaring and breaking of waves upon a rocky coast....now the doleful shrieking of unquiet spirits.

‘I should not much like to be alone in this dismal place,’ said Mactalla, getting closer to his master, ‘for I have heard that ghosts, like witches, ride upon the wind; though to be sure none but such as had very bad quarters at home would venture out such a night as this.’

‘And why not? seeing no blast that blew could injure them, being but airy nothing themselves.’

‘Holy St. Benedict! you believe in them then?’

‘No, I have not said I did. I have only spoken of them in the light in which they are regarded by those who do....but hark! methinks I hear the trampling of horses.’

Mactalla instantly became silent, and both listened attentively, but without hearing aught for a few minutes but the raging of the wind in the wood. They then clearly distinguished the clattering of horses’ hoofs, accompanied by a confused murmur of men’s voices.

‘Signor,’ cried Mactalla, in a whispering tone, and suddenly pressing the arm of Osmond, ‘let us be cautious; for I should not be in the least surprised if the men we hear were a troop of banditti. Holy St. Benedict take us into his keeping, and get us safely through the perils and dangers of this night!’

Osmond who did not by any means think his conjecture erroneous, now in his turn reminded him of the necessity of silence. The wind again rising, prevented their hearing for some minutes any other sounds than those that it occasioned. On its subsiding, they were startled by hearing the horses near the thicket which sheltered them, and a hoarse voice at the entrance exclaiming....‘Ho, here appears to be a spot that will afford shelter to ourselves and beasts; let us alight, and get out of this dreadful storm, which has given me a greater drenching than I ever got before.’

This speech induced Osmond and his companions to change their quarters. On advancing a little farther into the wood, they again paused, for the purpose of listening to the conversation of those who had obliged them to

move, and which in a few minutes convinced them they were not wrong in their surmises respecting them.

They complained of their ill luck, in not having met with the booty they expected that night.

'But the night is not yet over,' observed one of the party, 'and before it is we may be more fortunate; so instead of any longer railing or lamenting, let us endeavour to do something to make ourselves comfortable. Come, stir about, lads, and try to get something together to make a fire.'

This order being obeyed, a quantity of faggots was speedily collected, and a light being struck, a fire was kindled, round which the party ranged themselves. The strong glare which the flame, as it spread, cast around them, permitted Osmond, on his cautiously advancing a few paces for the purpose, to view their countenances, than which nothing could be conceived more illustrative of their profession; cunning and ferocity were imprest on every feature, and an additional fierceness given to their aspects by their savage style of dress. Notwithstanding the disappointment they spoke of, and the weather, they appeared in high spirits; but, like their appearance, their mirth was of the roughest nature.

'Tivoli,' cried one of them, who by his ordering, seemed to have some authority over the rest, 'what provisions have you got?'

'But little, if any,' grumbled out a rough sullen bass voice, 'as you might know, if you gave yourself time to reflect; for many hands make light work.'

'True, true,' assented the other; 'I might have known, as you say, that we can't eat our cake and have it; but produce us what you have, and like an honest lad as you are, try if you can't rummage us out a flask of wine...it will help to warm us. I am devilish hungry, however, let me tell you.'

Wine being produced, the ruffians became still more noisy and argumentative than they had before been.

'Oh, holy St. Benedict!' at length softly exclaimed Mactalla, in his master's ear, 'what will become of us?'

'Trust in heaven,' returned Osmond, in the same low

‘So I do, Signor, blessed be the name of St. Benedict.’

‘Hollo, Tivoli,’ vociferated he who appeared to be the leader of this band of villains; ‘I say Tivoli, I’ll lead....mnd, if you don’t replenish the fire, if we shan’t soon be without a spark, which, seeing there is no prospect of the weather soon clearing, would not be over agreeable.’

After a pause, Tivoli replied.... ‘Why I can find no more faggots.’

‘By the head of our fraternity,’ cried the other, ‘but that is a good joke. I trow if you can see the wood for trees. Here, numskull, take this brand and search about; dive deeper into the wood, and I’ll warrant me you’ll have something more than your pains for your trouble.’

‘I’ll bear him company,’ said another, starting up, and also snatching a brand from the fire, the strong glare of which falling full upon his features, permitted Osmond and Mactalla to have a full view of them, which the latter no sooner had, than starting back.... ‘Oh, holy St. Benedict!’ crossing himself, and in an under tone, he exclaimed, ‘who could have thought of such a thing? but that man’s being here is wonderful.’

‘What man?’ demanded Osmond, with involuntary quickness, but also in a low voice.

‘Don’t question me now, Signor; I am too much flurried to be able to answer you.’

‘Dive deep into the wood, lads, and you’ll be certain of getting plenty of fuel,’ again vociferated the leader; ‘we lack comfort much; so let us at least have that of a good fire.’

The men advanced in the direction in which Osmond and his companions were. The former kept a watchful eye upon them, and as they gradually advanced, gradually retreated. The little French boy was here as troublesome as he had proved on the road....his attention being so engrossed by the banditti, that he continually suffered Osmond and Mactalla to get the start of him, and the his fears returning, obliged them, by some vehement though not loud exclamation, to retrace their way for him.

At length Osmond, in consequence of hearing the fians who had been sent to gather wood, suddenly, as if to listen, began to fear the boy had been overheard.

a fear in which he was shortly confirmed by hearing one of them exclaim.... 'Aye, aye, d.....mn.....tion, what can it be?'

He paused no longer, but driving the boy before him, stopt not again until, with his companions, he found himself in a small opening amongst some thickets, on the edge of a rapid river. Owing to the remoteness of this spot from the place where they had left the banditti, he conceived they could not find a better one to stop in. At all events, they had no other alternative than either to do so, or retrace the way they had come, the thickets that extended on either side appearing absolutely impenetrable.

'Yes, yes,' said Mactalla, replying to what he said on the subject, 'we are here, I think, perfectly safe, blessed be good St. Benedict for his attention to my prayers. The moment I set my foot in the town of Cassino, where stands his own convent, founded by himself, I shall take care to make him a return, and that of no trifling nature either, for his goodness on this occasion. Yes, yes, he shall find I have a proper sense of gratitude for his protection of us this night.'

Osmond could not forbear smiling at the simplicity of his attendant, although by no means at ease in his own mind....his uncertainty of the direction the banditti might pursue not permitting him to be without some apprehension still of their being discovered. It now occurred to him to inquire whether Mactalla had put away any weapons of defence for them? and to his great vexation was answered in the negative; for his great omission in not doing which, Mactalla implored his forgiveness, and accounted for by declaring he was so agitated between joy and grief at quitting Acerenza, that he scarce knew what he was about.

The fury of the storm had by this time much abated....the rain was nearly over, the wind had sunk into a hollow murmur, and at intervals the moon showed her pale face, as on that sad night, 'when Arindal the mighty fell, when Daura the lovely failed, fair as the moon on the hills of Fura, white as the driven snow, sweet as the breathing gale.'

'The weather clears so fast,' said Mactalla, after a long and profound silence, 'that I dare say the banditti will soon leave the coast clear to us again.'

'Till the return of the morning, however, I think it better for us to remain where we now are,' observed Osmond.

'Assuredly, Signor; but,' starting, and laying his hand upon his master's arm, 'blessed St. Benedict!' is there not something rustling amongst the trees?'

Osmond listened for a few minutes attentively; then....'tis but the horses moving,' cried he; 'let us, however, be silent, lest an enemy be nearer than we imagine.'

The silence he enjoined was soon however, interrupted by the boy (who, with the restlessness peculiar to his age, had wandered away to a distance) exclaiming aloud, as if in the greatest agony....'I am killed! I am killed!'

Osmond flew to his assistance, and raising him from the ground, on which he found him extended, enquired what had happened?

'Oh master, master, said or rather roared the boy, 'one of my legs is surely broke, for the mule has trod upon it.'

'By St. Benedict, I wish,' cried Mactalla, who followed close upon the steps of his master, 'that it was your head she had got under her foot, and that she had kept it there till the day of judgment.'

Osmond having satisfied himself that the leg was not fractured, endeavoured to silence the boy, and at last, though not without much difficulty, succeeded.

'A pretty thing, you little urchin,' proceeded Mactalla, 'if, through your squalling, any mischief should befall us. By the Lord I have a great mind to make both you and your mule pay this instant for all the vagaries you have both been going on with ever since you left Acerenza. Signor, do you think he could possibly have been heard by the ruffians?'

'I hope not,' replied Osmond.

'Ah, the cut-throat dogs, what an escape we have had from them!'

'You should return thanks, to Heaven for it,' rejoined his master.

'So I do, Signor, so I do; blessed be the name of St. Benedict for his kindness to us.'

'Aye, aye, you have reason indeed to be thankful to him for his kindness in throwing you into our power,' exclaimed a hoarse voice at the moment, immediately behind him; and at the same instant he felt his arms seized, as were also those of Osmond.

Their feelings on the occasion at finding themselves surprised by the villains they flattered themselves they had escaped from, may easier be conceived than described.

Osmond, however, speedily collecting himself, made an effort to regain their liberty, but an unsuccessful one, by offering to surrender quietly all they were possessed of at the moment, for the purpose. He and Mactalla were forced to mount their own horses, not however without much resistance on the part of the latter... he stamped, stormed, begged, prayed, but all to no purpose.

'There's no use in praying to us,' cried one of the gang; 'what's become of your friend St. Benedict, that you should leave off doing so to him?'

'Ha, ha, Monsieur Frenchman,' exclaimed another of the party, 'tis to you we are indebted for this prize. Tivoli, let's see what his mule is loaded with.'

Tivoli obeyed. The provisions he produced were eagerly devoured. They then remounted, daylight beginning to appear, and, with Osmond and Mactalla in the centre, set off at a smart pace.

After pursuing some time the road their prisoners had deviated from, in order to obtain shelter from the storm, they struck into a deep forest, which they continued to traverse for a considerable period, in the most zig-zag manner imaginable, making openings for themselves through apparently impenetrable thickets, by the removal of matted boughs, which they still replaced, not only with astonishing dexterity, but so as to deceive the nicest eye.

CHAP. II.

' Black was the forest, thick with beech it stood,
Horrid with fern, and intricate with thorn;
Few paths of human feet, or tracks of beasts were worn.'

OSMOND, who possessed in an eminent degree that cool and steady courage which keeps the mind collected in the hour of danger, could not but admire the ingenuity they displayed in the methods they had recourse to to prevent pursuit.

Their not having put him and his companions immediately to death, induced him to believe it was not their intention to do so; but either to sell them to slavery in some foreign land, or keep them in a state of servitude upon themselves.

This idea induced him to take as much notice as possible of the labyrinths they travelled, that in case he should be fortunate enough to succeed in making his escape, he might not be altogether destitute of a clue to guide him through them.

At length, emerging from the 'close dungeon of innumerable boughs,' through which they had so long been pursuing their way, Osmond beheld a rude lawn, terminated by a narrow but rapid river, on the opposite bank of which arose the massy walls of an immense fabric, surmounted by tremendous heights, bespread with wood, and exhibiting a scene of solemn grandeur, rendered still more impressive by the decaying appearance of the pile they commanded....for as the dawn was by this time sufficiently advanced to permit objects to be distinguished, Osmond could perceive that many of its proudly-swell-ing and receding towers were green with the moss of age, and several of its turrets and strongholds shattered and crumbling away.

But as (to use the words of a celebrated author) we look upon the 'wounds of a defaced soldier with more veneration than we do upon the most exact proportions

of a beautiful woman, so in all probability this magnificent structure inspired Osmond with greater admiration as well as awe, now in the wane of its days, than it would have done in all its pride and glory.

The pleasure, however, the contemplation of it afforded him was as transient as involuntary. The dreadful purposes to which there was reason to suppose it now devoted....the idea of the equally dreadful fate that perhaps awaited him and his companions within it...for he speedily learned that this was the retreat of the banditti...made him presently view it with horror.

On reaching the river, the ruffians stopt, and a bugle being sounded by one of them, a draw-bridge was quickly let down, which crossing, they entered upon a deep vaulted passage, guarded at each end by a heavy portal of iron and wood, and still further defended by towers. On quitting this, they alighted, and proceeded on foot through a succession of gloomy courts, encompassed by mouldering buildings, to a hall of vast magnitude, lighted by a large fire and several immense lamps, with flaming burners, suspended from the ceiling, and which altogether, from its numerous arcades, its double row of pointed windows, divided by spacious galleries, the stately pillars that supported its ponderous and richly-fretted roof, and the various outlets by means of small gothic doors that appeared among these, strongly resembled the interior of a cathedral. At the upper end was a large table, which two men were busied in spreading for an entertainment. Of these one of the ruffians demanded whether the Captain and his party were yet returned? and on being answered in the negative, he and his companions immediately withdrew, in rude and clamorous confusion, to exchange their wet clothes for dry ones, leaving Osmond and Mactalla to their own cogitations.

No sooner had they withdrawn, than Osmond, anxious to mitigate the terror which his countenance evinced his entertaining for their personal safety, by imparting to him the conjectures he had formed with regard to the intentions of the banditti concerning them, turned eagerly towards Mactalla, who stood at a little distance from him; but to his surprise, instead of being able to catch

his attention, he saw it rivetted upon an opposite and half-open door, at which a beckoning hand was just visible, and which at last he approached, but with seeming reluctance, and instantly after disappeared.

This incident gave birth to a more unpleasant sensation in the mind of Osmond than any he had before experienced. When he reflected, however, on the length of time Mactalla had been in the service of his noble friends at Acerenza, and the high character they had given him, the suspicion it awakened of his integrity was done away, and in its place the possibility there was of his having recognized among the banditti some person whom he had formerly known, suggested itself to him.... an idea that gained strength, on his recalling to his recollection the surprise he had suddenly given indications of experiencing in the wood. But that any good was likely to accrue from this circumstance, Osmond could scarcely flatter himself, in consequence of his conceiving it scarcely possible that any one but a mind incapable of a generous action, could be the associate of such wretches.

Harassed by fatigue and agitation, he threw himself on a bench near the fire. But neither fatigue nor agitation prevented his making vigorous efforts to keep himself from sinking into utter despair....efforts, however, which the uninterrupted leisure he now had to reflect on his situation, would hardly have permitted to be successful, but for the firm reliance he had on Providence.

The shock occasioned by the change in it was heightened by the sudden manner in which that change had taken place....the anguish it inspired by the contrast he could not help drawing between what it now was and had been.

Oh where were now the pleasing hopes, the delightful visions he had indulged in with almost a certainty of seeing them realized ! Gone, lost, dispersed, without leaving aught behind but their aggravating remembrance. Yes, the recollection of departed joys, like a gloomy ghost, or rather a malicious fiend, heightened the horrors of his present situation, by forcing him to contrast them with past pleasures.

At length, from the contemplation of what he could

not meliorate, he tried to detach his thoughts, by surveying the spacious apartment in which he found himself.

The imposing grandeur of its appearance was well calculated to do this, by bringing to his recollection the days of other years, when doubtless far other sounds than now prevailed within it, awoke its echoes.

'How humbled is now this proud edifice!' he mentally exclaimed, 'how degraded its honours! What a saddening conviction does its altered state afford, of the fluctuating nature of all sublunary things! Its towers no longer yielding repose to the weary traveller....its chambers security or peace....clamour and intemperence presiding at its banquets....and violence stalking round its dreary walls!'

The sound of a bugle from without interrupted his meditations....a sound which quickly and in tumultuous disorder brought back most of the party that had made him prisoner. They passed with quickness through the hall to meet the new comers, consisting of their Captain and several comrades without, and with whom they speedily returned, together with two females and a gentleman, who had just fallen into their hands.

To describe what Osmond felt at this moment, at beholding females in the power of such ruffians, is impossible. How much more so, therefore, to describe what he suffered, when, owing to the accidental falling back of her veil, he discovered, in the features of one of these unhappy ladies, the enchanting features of Miss Raymond!

For a minute horror suspended all his faculties.... Then....'Oh, could it be, was it possible, in agony he asked himself, 'that she, whose beauty was sufficient to make an anchorite almost forget his vows, was she in the power of a lawless banditti!'

From an attitude of deep despondence he was at length roused by the fainting of her mother (as he took it for granted the other lady was,) on the seat which had been pointed out to her on entering the hall. He instantly sprung forward, forgetful, in his eagerness to render her

assistance, of the effect which his sudden and unexpected appearance might perhaps have upon Miss Raymond.

On his approach, she lifted her eyes from the inanimate form of her mother, and meeting his, started back, with a look that seemed to say she was doubtful at the moment of the evidence of her senses. Then, in a trembling, an agitated voice.... 'Gracious Heavens,' she exclaimed, 'do I really behold Mr. Munro? Has he then been as unfortunate as we are?'

An expressive look was the only way in which Osmond was capable of replying at the moment to this question.

Miss Raymond now appearing to recollect herself a little, replaced her arm under the head of her mother, and removed the veil with which, like herself, she also was covered, to give her air; whilst Osmond regaining the power of speech, entreated a glass of water. This, though neither very speedily nor very graciously, he succeeded in obtaining; and by its aid she was soon after brought to herself.

On regaining her senses.... 'Oh, my dear mother,' cried her lovely daughter, as she supported her still drooping head on her bosom, 'we are not alone unfortunate: Mr. Munro is equally so; for he also has fallen into the power (lowering his voice) of these wretches.'

'Mr. Munro!' repeated her mother, with quickness, and raising her head, she turned her eyes full upon Osmond: Good Heavens, is it possible?'

Osmond bowed respectfully on catching her glance.... 'Be assured, Madam,' he said, 'I shall cease to regret the circumstance that brought me hither, if it should furnish me with an opportunity of rendering you any service. At all events, whether it should or not, I trust it will be some little mitigation of your distress, some consolation to you, to know that there is a person at hand who sympathises in your sufferings, and would willingly risk his life to serve you.'

'Your countenance convinces me of your sincerity,' with a grateful look, returned Mrs. Raymond; 'and though I am well aware that the acknowledgment is calculated to fasten upon me the imputation of selfishness,

I cannot help confessing that I derive satisfaction from seeing you here ; but 'tis natural, and therefore I trust in some degree excusable, to be pleased, in the hour of distress, at meeting with those who can sympathise with us. I will construe finding a friend in this terrifying place into a favourable omen, and not only pray but hope that Heaven will deliver us in safety from it.'

As, from some words which had escaped Miss Raymond, Osmond understood the gentleman who had been brought in along with them was Mr. Raymond, he could not help being surprised at his not making an attempt to afford the least assistance to Mrs. Raymond ; and still more on catching him, while the above conversation was passing, attentively regarding him from behind a pillar, with (Osmond could not help thinking from his attitude, for his countenance was completely shaded from view by the cape of a great-coat, and a large hat) an angry and indignant aspect, for which he could not possibly account, as he knew he was sufficiently near to distinguish his daughter's address to him, and of consequence know he did not belong to the banditti.

Osmond was prevented replying to Mrs. Raymond by the approach of the Captain. He came to inquire whether the ladies chose any supper, which, notwithstanding the hour, he denominated the meal to which he was about sitting down ; and on being answered in the negative....' O very well,' he exclaimed, with an air of the most callous indifference ; ' then there is no use in your remaining any longer here : so hollo, Cesaria....I say Cesaria, hollo.'

' Here, noble Captain,' answered an old woman, limping towards him from a side door, with a lamp in one hand, a stick in the other, and a large bunch of keys dangling from her girdle, and so withered and so wild in her attire, so perfectly corresponding with the representation given of witches, that if an inhabitant of England some hundred years back, Osmond made no doubt she would have been compelled to go through some disagreeable ordeal.

' Shew these ladies to their apartments in the north tower,' he resumed ; ' and that gentleman,' pointing to

Mr. Raymond, who still retained his station at the pillar : 'as to you, Sir,' glancing at Osmond, 'a chamber is prepared for you in another part of the building.'

Osmond was concerned to hear this ; nor were the ladies less so. Almost convinced, however, that to oppose the arrangement would be useless, they expressed, but by looks, the discontent it gave them.

'Yes, noble Captain,' said the hag, replying to her master, and motioning at the same time to his fair prisoners to follow her.

As Mrs. Raymond rose to obey this motion, she kissed her hand, with a look of gratitude to Osmond ; nor did her lovely daughter pass him without noticing him by a similar one.

He continued motionless on the spot where she had left him, gazing after her ; and then when she had entirely disappeared from his view, amidst the remote and clustered pillars of the hall...invoking all those

'Angels and seraphs who delight in goodness,
To forsake their skies, and to her couch descend,'

until roused from his abstraction by a violent pull by the sleeve, and the hoarse voice of one of the ruffians exclaiming....' D....mn me, Sir, are you deaf ? I have been bawling in your ear this half hour to know whether you would chuse any supper ?

Osmond, sick at heart from the horrid fears which had taken possession of him respecting Miss Raymond, replied in the negative.

'Then I presume,' the other rejoined, 'you have no objection to retiring to rest ?'

Osmond bowed.

'Here then, Ossuna,' beckoning to a man at some distance, 'here, I say ; shew the Signor here to one of the chambers of the long gallery.'

Ossuna nodded, and approached with a lamp ; and at the same moment the other went back to the supper-table, which by this time was covered, and about which most of the gang had taken their seats, all apparently in high glee.

But though anxious to retire from a scene of such

coarseness and riot as the present, Osmond was withheld from immediately quitting it, by the surprise he experienced at beholding Mactalla, just as Ossuna was approaching him, busily employed, and with an air of the greatest satisfaction, in attending on the robbers.

This sight revived his former suspicion concerning him, but which his entirely yielding to was still opposed by the consideration of the character he had received of him, and at length usurped by another, namely, of his brain being turned by terror....a suspicion in which the longer he attended to him the more he was confirmed, as nothing could possibly be stranger than his grimaces, or more curious than his replies to the questions which from time to time the robbers addressed to him.

‘What’s your name, fellow?’ at last demanded the Captain, slightly glancing at him over his shoulder, as he stood behind his chair, with a golden goblet in his hand.

‘Mactalla, an please your reverence,’ with a low bow, he replied, although at the moment the Captain’s back was entirely turned to him.

‘Very well, then, I say Mr. Mac,’ but without looking at him, and with his mouth half full, ‘I say what are you good for?’

‘Why, please your reverence, like my neighbours, perhaps not good for a great deal: but then (with quickness) I am willing.’

‘Ha....willingness makes amends in some degree for want of abilities; but I say....I suppose you could put your hands to something?’

‘Yes, please your reverence,’ with a rather low bow, though still the eyes of the Captain were directed from him, ‘to any thing you should wish me to lay it on.’

‘Ha, very well, very well, that will do: we want assistants in the menial line, for instance in the stables. I suppose you could trim a horse?’

‘Yes, or an ass, please your reverence, if one fell in my way.’

‘Ha, ha, well said, Mr. Mac,’ shouted one of the party....‘here’s my service to you, and let me tell you ’tis not here you’ll be likely to meet with one.’

‘ Yes, yes, it must be so,’ said Osmond, mentally, and with a deep sigh, as he motioned Ossuna, to lead the way from the hall ; ‘ yes, yes, ’tis too evident that fear has deranged his intellects. Unhappy creature ! and yet he is not so great an object of compassion as at the first glance one might be led to imagine ; for doubtless the keenness of his feelings is blunted by the state to which he is reduced.’

From the hall Osmond was conducted through several winding passages to a spacious staircase of oval form, terminating in a long gallery, near the extremity of which Ossuna opened a door, and bade him enter, presenting him at the same time with the lamp he had hitherto carried. Osmond obeyed, and immediately after heard the door locked on the outside. Left to himself, he elevated the lamp, in order to be better enabled to see about him, and found himself within a large bed-chamber, with two other doors half open in it. Curiosity and suspicion inducing him to examine beyond these, he found they merely led into small cabinets, to which there appeared no other means of obtaining admission than what they afforded. His examination of these over, he resolved on admitting the light of day, if possible, into his apartment ; but to his infinite mortification, soon found that all the spaces formerly occupied by lattices were now blocked up with closely-cemented stones.

Compelled to be content with the sickly light of the lamp, he placed it on an old-fashioned dressing-table, and threw himself into an equally old-fashioned chair beside it, unable to rest, or rather shuddering with horror at the thoughts of resigning himself to repose, from the dreadful apprehensions with which he was tormented about Miss Raymond.

‘ Oh, should these soul-harrowing apprehensions be realized !’ he wildly cried....he paused, he started.... ‘ Even now....even now,’ with greater emotion, he exclaimed, ‘ they may be on the point of being so....even now some ruffian may be stalking to her chamber....even now, regardless of their mingling shrieks, be tearing her from the arms of her mother, the grasp of her father !’

His veins swelled, his temples throbbed, every limb

shook with agitation, as this dreadful idea suggested itself to his imagination. With a glaring eye he searched round the chamber, in hope of discovering some weapon of defence ; but nothing met it but mouldering furniture and dark wainscotting, destitute of any ornament, but here and there a fragment of tapestry. He then proceeded to the door, and tried to force it, for the purpose of going in quest of the north tower, and risking his life, if necessary, in uniting with the father to try and preserve the daughter ; but it resisted all his efforts to wrench it from the hinges.

With suspended-breath he then listened attentively at it ; but no sigh, no scream, no shriek of distress met his ear. A deathlike stillness prevailed throughout, but a stillness from which he derived no consolation, when he reflected that, from the magnitude of the building, the most atrocious deeds might be perpetrated at one end, without those at the other having the smallest intimation of them.

At length the impossibility of accomplishing his wishes in the present instance induced him to endeavour to calm the apprehensions to which they were owing. He called his reason, his religion, his fortitude to his aid. He reflected, that she for whose safety he was so agonized, was under the special protection of a divine Being...of Him, whose angels watch over the couch of innocence and virtue...of Him, whose eye, whose ear, was never closed ; who was at once omniscient and omnipresent.

As his confidence in Heaven revived, the tumult of his spirits, the burning heat of his brain, subsided. He quitted the door ; and though the appearance of the bed was extremely uninviting...its long dingy curtains of dark-green velvet, and moth-eaten coverlid of the same, giving it a sepulchral air, chilling to the feelings...threw himself upon it, but without taking off any of his cloaths.

But instead of courting sleep, he now busied himself in recalling to his recollection all that had passed between him and the fair Cordelia in the hall ; in reflecting on the enquiries she must have made, the conversations she must have held respecting him, to be acquainted with his name, and render it also so familiar to her mother :

but the idea that to curiosity alone both might be owing, checked the hopes they might otherwise have given birth to.

That it was either from the Marchesa Morati or Lady Elizara she had learnt who he was, he could not doubt; and he felt happy at the idea, from his conviction of their favourable sentiments for him....until he reflected, that perhaps it was solely owing to the flattering terms in which he had been mentioned to her, and to no prepossession in his favour, that he was indebted for the notice she had taken of him.

‘But how ungenerous to wish her to feel such a prepossession....to wish her to harbour sentiments which could not fail of being productive of regret, of uneasiness to her, so great are the obstacles, so little the likelihood of their ever being overcome, which fortune has placed between us.’ He reflected....‘Henceforth it shall be my study to suppress such a wish, to avoid her society as much as possible. Ah Heavens! how idly do I talk! how strangely do I forget our present situation! Perhaps I shall be but too soon convinced that I shall never have another opportunity of beholding her.’

The anguish imparted by this thought, since he could not conquer, he at length strove to lose in sleep; but the repose he courted his perturbed imagination would not permit him to enjoy. Though his eyes were closed, frightful and disjointed visions harassed and perplexed him: from one of these he was suddenly roused by a noise outside the chamber door, but which, for a minute or two, he knew not whether to imagine ideal or not.

At length convinced his ear had not deceived him, and that it was occasioned by some one endeavouring to unlock it in such a way as should prevent their being overheard, he softly quitted the bed, and, approaching the door, applied his eye to the keyhole, but involuntarily started back on doing so, in consequence of perceiving one apparently on fire, and of more than human size, glaring through it. A moment’s reflection, however, by enabling him to account for the extraordinary appearance of this eye, which was entirely owing to an oblique light interposing between it and the door, made him smile at

himself for 'having done so, and apply his again to the aperture ; on doing which, he distinguished two men, the hand of one upon the key, and to whose cautious efforts to open it the door at length gave way ; and Osmond retreating behind it, determined at least to have a struggle for his life ; for that it had been opened in this manner for the purpose of dispatching him while he (as it was imagined) slept, he had not the remotest doubt.

The men on advancing a few paces in the chamber, stopt, and the foremost of them, who carried a lanthorn, emitting just a sufficient ray to permit their persons to be visible, exclaimed, in a whispering voice, after listening attentively a few minutes.... 'Aye, aye, he is fast asleep little dreaming, I warrant, of what is about happening to him.'

'No, I dare say not,' replied the other, in the same low key ; 'but come, I'll be off, as you say you don't want my assistance ; but take care you don't neglect making a proper use of the present opportunity for quieting him ; such another may not occur again. In less than half an hour I shall expect to hear that you have settled his business properly.'

A significant nod was the only reply he received ; and retiring, his companion secured the door with the same caution with which he had opened it ; after which, with noiseless steps, he approached the bed.

Within a few paces of it, a sudden elevation of the lanthorn causing the light to fall full on his features, those of Mactalla became visible to the astonished Osmond.

All his former suspicions of him instantly revived. He no longer doubted his being an accomplice of the banditti....no longer doubted his having betrayed him into their power, and now undertaken the horrid task of murdering him.

'Dear and amiable Marchesa,' he involuntarily exclaimed to himself, 'little did you imagine what a fatal present you were making me : but he shall not....no, the villain shall not quietly triumph in his wickedness ; he shall at least experience the shame of detection.' And Osmond was springing forwards, when a kind of fearful

curiosity to see what steps he would take, on finding the bed vacated, suddenly withheld him.

Having placed the lanthorn on the floor, Mactalla gently opened the side curtains, thrust his head between, and continued for a minute in a listening attitude; then, drawing from his bosom what seemed to be a glittering dagger, he appeared to plunge it repeatedly into the bed.

Osmond's feelings, no longer controlable, he was again on the point of rushing on him, when again he was prevented by a sudden exclamation of.... 'Oh, holy St. Benedict! I am ruined.... I am deceived! I have trusted in a villain, and he has undone me! Yes,' he continued, snatching up the lamp, and tearing open the curtains, 'he has made away with him himself, and that not a minute ago; for (laying his hand upon it) the bed is still warm; but I'll be revenged.... yes, I'll be revenged on you, you deceitful villain, though I should lose my life for being so,'.... hastily advancing as he spoke towards the door.

'Hold, my friend, hold,' cried Osmond, interposing as cautiously as possible between him and it, and with forced calmness, the sudden transition from despair to hope, suspicion to confidence, occasioning him no less emotion than had his late dreadful apprehensions, and also no little remorse, for ever having doubted the integrity of Mactalla, notwithstanding the sufficient excuse he had for doing so.

'Is it you.... is it yourself that I hear?' cried Mactalla, in a transport of joy, which had a doubt to his prejudice lingered in the mind of Osmond, would have completely dissipated it, elevating the lanthorn to his face as he spoke, in order to assure himself he was not mistaken.... 'Blessed be the Powers above for your being still alive and safe. I thought Felisco had done your business for you; for evil communication, they say, corrupts good manners: but if he had, it should have been the worst business he ever had a hand in.'

'Pray explain the recent scene,' said Osmond, advancing from the door, and motioning for him also to quit it, 'which I confess alarmed me not a little.'

'I cannot tell you particulars now,' replied Mactalla; '*I can only tell you that in the course of the night you*

shall be informed of what you are so desirous to hear.... 'tis now getting late.'

'Late!' interrupted Osmond, not a little surprised. 'Is it possible I can have slept so long?'

'Tis very true indeed,' rejoined Mactalla; 'tis as I have already told you, late, and such of the gang as intend being upon the prowl to-night are already off. As soon as I leave you, repair to the hall, where you'll find refreshments ready for you. After partaking of these, express a wish for a little air; and on descending to the court, turn to the right, and keep in that direction till you come to an arched gateway: pass through it, and a little beyond it, at the left side, you'll perceive a narrow passage; there remain till I come to you. Should any one enquire by what means it was you got out of your chamber, say Felisco opened the door for you, which will be readily believed, as he often has charge of the prisoners.'

'Hold,' cried Osmond catching him by the sleeve, in order to prevent his immediately quitting him, as upon laying the lanthorn upon the table to supply the place of the lamp, which had long been extinguished, he was about doing.... Can you give me any information of the other prisoners the banditti made last night?

I know of no other than ourselves.'

He informed him.

He sat him for a minute with a vacant look.... He replied he.

'Indeed,' returned Osmond; 'Mr. Felisco are now in the same unhappy situation.'

'Felisco about them?'

'From you have so often mentioned, whom you appear to be so well acquainted with.'

'Not at all, Signor; but at present, I am not acquainted with him.'

'The enquiries you have procured, will lead you the way to the north of the city.'

'I will go only to the north, and I will go only to the north, and I will go only to the north.'

Osmond remained for some minutes after him in a most painful state of anxiety and suspense, owing to the vague hopes and expectations which his words had given rise to ; for unsatisfactory as they were, still Osmond clearly comprehended from them that a scheme was in agitation for their deliverance

As soon as he had a little collected himself, he quitted his chamber, but without taking the lanthorn, the gallery beyond it admitting the light of the day. He had not advanced a great way down this, when the sight of some steps he had not noticed before inclined him to believe he had mistaken his way, and he was thinking of retracing it, for the purpose of trying to detect his error, when, casting his eyes forward, he beheld a staircase to the left, which induced him to advance ; and though on gaining this he found it was not the one he had ascended to the gallery, still concluding it led to the hall, he ventured to go down it. As he proceeded, he could not forbear pausing to admire its singular form, expanding towards the top like a fan, and the richness of its sculptured walls and cornices, and which led him to believe it had formerly been the principal staircase....a belief in which he was confirmed on finding it terminated in an immense rotunda, covered with a majestic dome resting on rows of marble pillars, and from which several passages branched off in various directions. This magnificent apartment opened by means of several folding-doors, now more than half demolished, to the hanging wood, which, on his approach to the edifice, had caught the attention of Osmond, and over which the setting sun now shed a mellow lustre, that rendered still more picturesque their appearance. Osmond eagerly advanced to one of these openings, to inhale the fresh breeze that sighed through the waving foliage, and gaze for an instant upon the romantic scenery before him. Almost insensibly the contemplation of this calmed his spirits, and wrapt in the pensive musings it inspired, he might perhaps have continued some time, had he not suddenly recollected his appointment with Mactalla.

He re-ascended, as he thought, the stair-case he had come down ; but a door at the top convinced him he was wrong.

Fearful of being involved in the intricate passages below, he knocked at this door, for the purpose of trying whether any one was within, that he might enquire his way to the hall.

A voice immediately replied. ...to which his heart vibrated....the soft, the melodious voice of Miss Raymond. With a hand trembling with agitation, he immediately tried to open the door; but it resisted his effort....there was a key in it....he tried again, and was more successful.

He found both mother and daughter near it, evidently watching with looks of anxiety and terror for the appearance of the person who had demanded admission. The most joyful surprise appeared in the countenance of both at seeing him.

‘Good Heavens! Mr. Munro,’ delightedly exclaimed Mrs. Raymond, eagerly approaching as he spoke, and presenting her hand with the familiar and affectionate air of an old friend, ‘is it you I behold? How did you discover where we were?’

‘By chance,’ replied Osmond, eagerly taking her proffered hand and pressing his lips to it, his eyes, however, a little wandering from her towards her lovely daughter; ‘but a chance which I shall for ever bless, since it affords me an opportunity of quieting, in some degree, the apprehensions you must be under, by informing you that I think there is a hope of our being able to effect our escape.’

He then, in a lower voice, and as briefly as possible, gave her the particulars of his recent conversation with his servant, and ended by solemnly assuring her, except their deliverance could be effected as well as his, nothing should induce him to quit the place.

Mrs. Raymond listened to him with profound attention, and was evidently on the point of replying to this assurance, when Mr. Raymond prevented her, by exclaiming, in the most ungracious accent, from the lower end of the room, which was long, and had once been magnificent, and at which he stood by an open lattice, with his back towards the door....‘Sir, you interference rela-

tive to us is not necessary: we have the means of effecting our deliverance in our own hands.'

Astonished and confused by this speech, Osmond for a minute could only gaze at the ungracious person from whom it proceeded, and Mrs. Raymond, as if to ask the occasion of it. He was on the point of exculpating himself from the charge of officiousness, of which he conceived it indirectly accused him, when Mrs. Raymond prevented what he would have said by eagerly exclaiming.... 'My... Mr. Raymond, I mean,' hesitating a little, and colouring as if confused, by having been on the point of saying something she should not, 'has merely said what he did, to prevent your having any unnecessary trouble on our account. We'....

'Ah, Madam,' involuntarily interrupted Osmond, 'I could never consider as a trouble any thing I did for you or yours. Great, however, as is the happiness I should have derived from having the power of rendering you a service, I sincerely rejoice, from the conviction it affords me of your safety, that in the present instance none is required from me.'

'Mrs. Raymond bowed her thanks....' About two hours ago,' cried she, 'the Captain of the banditti entered this apartment, to inform us that we should be restored to liberty, and conducted in safety to the place we wish to go to, provided, in addition to what he has already received from us, he obtain the further sum of a thousand pounds. Mr. Raymond eagerly embraced this proposal, and has given him a draft on a banker in Naples, to whom the letter of credit he brought him from England has been transmitted. With this draft a man was immediately dispatched; and as soon as he returns, we are to be liberated. Heaven grant the same moment may see us all beyond these walls; for should you remain behind, my joy at our restoration to liberty will be not a little damped, especially as I rather apprehend, from the Captain having laid us under no injunction of secrecy with respect to his haunt, that there is but little likelihood of our being able to describe it to those who could effect your deliverance from it.'

* For your generous anxiety for that, accept my ac-

knowledgments, Madam,' cried Osmond; 'I trust I shall be successful in the efforts I shall myself make for it; but should I be disappointed, trust me I shall derive the greatest consolation from the idea of your safety.'

'So I am convinced,' replied Mrs. Raymond; 'for the liberal heart can never be solely engrossed by selfish anxiety.'

'Psha, psha, have done with this sentimental stuff!' exclaimed Mr. Raymond, still with his back turned towards Osmond, and in the same tone in which he had before spoken; 'and let that gentleman retire; for should he be surprised here, disagreeable consequences may ensue from the circumstance.'



CHAP. IV.

'The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them; Sloth and Folly
Shiver and shrink at sight of Toil and Hazard,
And make th' impossibility they fear.'

Rowe.

'TRUE, Sir,' immediately returned Osmond, but with a cheek flushed with indignation, 'I am to blame for not having reflected on this myself;' then, after a gentle pressure, resigning the hand of Mrs. Raymond, 'farewell, Madam,' he added; 'should we never meet again'.....

'Oh, do not dwell upon so horrid an idea,' eagerly interrupting him, and turning pale; 'remember that to doubt the goodness of Providence is to merit not experiencing it.'

Osmond bowed.....'Be assured, Madam,' he said, 'I do not despair;' then, repeating his adieu, and casting a lingering look at Miss Raymond, who, evidently in a state of the greatest agitation, he saw moving towards a seat, he retreated.

Scarcely had he regained the rotunda, when a man, with a drawn sword, rushed out upon him, from one of

the passages, and fiercely demanded what had brought him there?

Osmond, but stepping back a few paces, replied, in pairing to the hall he had mistaken his way.

‘Mistaken your way!’ echoed the other; ‘hav’nt you eyes?’

‘Certainly,’ with calmness, returned Osmond; ‘but the possession of our senses does not always keep from error.’

‘Well, I’ll put you right this once; but beware how you go astray again; for in this house we don’t like people to be poking their noses into all the holes and corners.’

He accordingly led him through several intricate avenues to the hall, at the entrance of which he left him. Here Osmond found two ill-looking fellows, employed in trimming the lamps and lighting them, one of whom pointed out a table to him spread with refreshment of which, however, the anxiety and perturbation he was in at the moment scarcely permitted him to partake.

The moment his slight repast was over, he expressed a wish, agreeably to the instructions of Mactalla, to go into the air; to which no opposition being made, he quitted the hall, but with an injunction to beware, as the night was coming on, of the ruinous parts of the building; and by a noble flight of Marble steps, covered with a spacious portico, and adorned on either side with antique statues of colossal size, he descended into the court.

Had he been in a happier frame of mind, he would have derived inexpressible pleasure from the soft and shadowy scene that prevailed without. The moon, already risen, held her way

‘Through skies where he could count each little star;’

and nought but the rustling of the trees in the breeze of night, and the wailings of the birds that lodged in the grass-grown and mouldering battlements of the building was to be heard.

As it was, he felt himself, somewhat revived, and, owing to the better hopes with which his recent interview with Mactalla had inspired him, and the dismission

his apprehensions concerning the Raymonds tranquillized by it.

He readily found the place to which he had been directed; the arch led into a court, open at the further end to the cliffs, and bounded on one side by a noble terrace, and the other by a decayed building, through the centre of which extended the narrow-vaulted, and now obscure passage, in which Mactalla had appointed to meet him.

Here, as he awaited his joining him, he involuntarily, and with a degree of astonishment, revolved the variety of strange events he had met with since his departure from his native country....the various agitating changes his feelings had undergone, from despondence to hope, hope to apprehension. Had he foreseen all that had since befallen him, he could not avoid thinking he should have shrunk from the perspective; and this idea made him more than ever admire and glorify the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, in keeping from his creatures a knowledge of the future, and thus preventing the strength and spirits requisite to support them beneath the pressure of misery from being exhausted by anticipations of it....anticipations of what is ever almost more terrific in imagination than reality: for, as an elegant author observes, 'As there is no prosperous state of life without its calamities, so there is no adversity without its benefits. Ask the great and powerful if they do not feel the pangs of envy and ambition? Enquire of the poor and needy if they have not tasted the sweets of quiet and contentment? Even under the pains of body, the infidelity of friends, or the misconstructions put upon our laudable actions, our minds (when for some time accustomed to these pressures) are sensible of secret flowings of comfort, the present reward of a pious resignation. The evils of this life appear like rocks and precipices, rugged and barren at a distance; but, at our nearer approach we find little fruitful spots and refreshing springs, mixed with the harshness and deformities of nature.'

While Osmond mused in this manner, a ray of light suddenly gleamed across the passage; and hastily turning his head, he beheld, through a chink in the wall

against which he was leaning, a human countenance earnestly regarding him.

Startled at this incident, lest his having been discovered in such a place should give birth to dangerous suspicions, he instantly determined on quitting it, and watching near it if he could find a spot to secrete himself, for the approach of Mactalla.

He accordingly hurried from it, and, at some distance, shrunk into a dusky recess he espied in the wall. Here he had not been many minutes, when he plainly distinguished approaching steps, and as plainly those of more than one person....a circumstance which induced him to believe he was sought after, in consequence of having been discovered in the passage, especially when he heard, in a minute after, a strange voice exclaiming....‘ Yes, yes, I am positive I saw him ;’....to which another, but in a much lower key, replied....‘ No such thing, I am certain ; your eyes doubtless deceived you.’ In consequence of which assertion, the other immediately cried....‘ Then curse me if I sleep till I have convinced you to the contrary. There’s not a hole or crevice which I will not search for him ; and when I have discovered him, I think I shall be able to make him speak the truth.’

This declaration induced Osmond to contract himself into as small a space as possible. His efforts to conceal himself were however unavailing. The men advanced, darted their eyes into the recess, and instantly stopt....he whom Osmond had first heard speak exclaiming as they did so....‘ He is here, he is here !’

Osmond, finding himself discovered, immediately came forward to meet, with courage whatever might ensue. Instead, however, of meeting with any thing disagreeable, as he rather expected would be the case, he was most agreeably surprised at perceiving the other man was Mactalla, as, from this circumstance, he at once concluded the former to be his friend ; in which conclusion he quickly found he was not mistaken.’

‘ This, Signor,’ cried Mactalla, after he had expressed the satisfaction his not failing in his appointment gave him, which from his not finding him where they had set-

to meet, he was rather apprehensive of his doing, notwithstanding the positive assurances of his companion who was stationed to watch for him, of having seen there,....' is Felisco, the young man of whom?.....' 'hold, hold, Mactalla,' interrupted his friend, 'recollect, there is no place to converse in.' 'true,' cried the other, nodding, 'I forgot that....' 'conduct us to one where we shall run no risk of being heard.'

Felisco obeyed by conducting them to a small room in the remotest and most intricate part of the deserted city, they were then near.

'Blessed St. Benedict!' exclaimed Mactalla, with an air of satisfaction, as soon as they entered, 'but this is a bad place to settle a plot in.... Guy Fawkes himself could not have had a better....and by the bye, now that I have secured him, it would be a good thing to lay such a trap as he did, and send, in the most expeditious manner possible, this old castle, and some forty or fifty of its inhabitants, to the devil.'

'Mactalla, you forget that time is precious,' said his friend.

'true, Signor, true; pray pardon me. Joy at the prospects of being able to make our escape has put me beside myself; but to lose no more time....You recollect, I dare say, the story I told you, as we travelled, of the village of Tessino?' 'perfectly,' replied Osmond.

'Well, Signor, this is he, the identical person,' laying his hand upon the shoulder of his companion, 'who indirectly occasioned the destruction of its inhabitants, my acquaintance and good friend Felisco, as he has provoked himself, by promising to deliver us from this infernal place?'

'Time does not permit me to explain,' said Felisco, Mactalla's pausing and motioning him to speak, 'the circumstances which caused me to become an inmate of this place. Suffice it say, Signor, they were such as, if known to you, (which, at some future period, if agreeable to you, they shall) would, I trust, in some degree, excuse my having done so, and prevent your feeling any unwilling-

ness to trusting yourself to my guidance. Previous to your being brought hither, I was meditating my own escape, having long since sincerely repented my ever having associated myself with such wretches. To-morrow night will, I think, furnish a favourable opportunity for effecting this, and of course yours ; as the whole of the gang, except such as are required to keep watch, and myself, owing to my pretending to have a sore leg, will be out, in consequence of information received from their scouts, of rich travellers being expected on the road... The care of the stables chiefly devolves on me ; and as the lawn is enclosed, I frequently turn out the horses not immediately required, and let them remain there all night : so that as I shall do this to-morrow, we shall find no difficulty in procuring them. Our principal one will arise from the centinels, of whom there are never less than seven, three to go the rounds of the castle on the inside, two on the outside, and two to keep watch at the portal at the outer court.'

'No matter, no matter,' eagerly exclaimed Osmond ; 'for the prize in view there is no hazard too great to run ; but tell me....tell me, my friend, do you think the other prisoners will be liberated by that time ?'

'Liberated ! repeated Felisco, in accents indicative of surprise ; 'I understand you not, Signor. What put it in your head that they were to be liberated ?'

Osmond hastily informed him.

'Alas ! Signor,' in reply, said Felisco, 'they are grossly imposed upon : beyond those walls there is not the remotest hope of their ever getting.'

'How !' cried Osmond, almost aghast with horror, 'imposed upon, say you ?'

'Yes, most grossly, I repeat : but compose yourself, Signor, and I'll briefly explain what I mean. Know, then, that the banditti of this place, instead of immediately putting to death those who are so unfortunate as to fall into their hands, as most of the fraternity do, generally bring them hither prisoners, for the purpose of adding to their spoils, by extorting money from them as a *ransom*. Their mode is to procure a draft from them on some agent, relative, or banker, for as large a sum as

they acknowledge the power of applying for, and which is always dated from some distant town, and accompanied by a letter, calculated to prevent any suspicion of its being unfairly obtained. The moment information of this being honoured is obtained, the unhappy dupe from whom it was procured, under a positive assurance of its obtaining him his liberty, is sacrificed to the safety of the gang. You, Signor, ere this, would have been troubled for something of the kind, but that owing to my being more than commonly interested about you, in consequence of your connection with my friend Mactalla here, whom I recollected the instant I saw him in the wood, I told the Captain, from a conversation I overheard between you and your servant, I was well convinced, if he managed matters properly, he might prevail on you to join his troop.'

'The execrable villain!' cried Osmond; 'no wonder indeed he did not lay the unhappy family under any injunction of secrecy as to his retreat, knowing, as he did, that it was his intention never to let them escape from it. But, my friend,' eagerly grasping the arm of Felisco, 'cannot you devise some scheme to enable them to accompany us? Except you save them....except you contrive that they should be the companions of our flight, you need make no effort for my deliverance.'

'By his Holiness's great toe, you know not what you require, Signor,' somewhat impatiently returned Felisco; 'one might almost as well attempt to run away with the Vatican as attempt to liberate those prisoners. Exactly at sun-set, a man goes up to see that the entrance to their apartment is secured in such a way as to put it out of the power of any one to give them egress from them, lest, if they obtained this, they should take it into their heads to ramble about the courts, and thus occasion the trouble of a search.'

The despair into which this statement threw him, now completely overcame Osmond. A film overspread his eyes, his ears rung with hollow murmurs, he staggered, and would have fallen, but for the quickness of Mactalla in catching him.

'The damps of this infernal place have made him ill,' said Mactalla, as he supported him; 'be quick, Felisco,

in finishing what further you have to say, that he may leave it.'

'No, no,' cried Osmond, coming a little to himself, and raising his head from the shoulder of Mactalla.... 'no, no,' wiping away the cold dew of sickness and dismay from his forehead, 'tis horror at the situation of the devoted prisoners. Tell me,' again addressing Felisco, 'is there no other entrance but the one which I discovered, to their apartments?'

Felisco looked earnestly at him, but hesitated to reply.

'Oh, for Heaven's sake!' supplicated Osmond in agony, 'do not keep me in suspense.'

'Well, Signor, I acknowledge there is; but the way to it lies through several apartments, difficult of access, and which have not for a long while been opened.'

'No matter, no matter,' cried Osmond, 'furnish me but with the means of entering them, and I shall for ever bless you.'

'Well, Signor, you shall be gratified. As soon as the return of the Captain to-morrow permits me to enter the room where all the keys not immediately wanted are deposited, I'll search for the ones you require, and bring them to you: Heaven grant you may succeed in your generous undertaking; but I much fear you will not, even though you should be able to penetrate these apartments....the entrance to the others, and which is at the further end of this suite, being a secret one, with the nature of which I am not acquainted.'

'Well, well, no matter,' replied Osmond, 'it must be of singular construction indeed, if it escape the diligent search I shall make for it.'

'At all events there's no use in playing the part of a raven, Felisco,' observed Mactalla, fearful of the effect which being again plunged into despair might have upon his master.

'Nay,' interrupted Osmond, fearful Felisco might be piqued by this observation, 'tis natural for him to speak his apprehensions.'

'I gave utterance to them out of a good motive, I assure you, Signor....to prevent your disappointment being too great, should you be unfortunate enough to meet with

one ; if successful, depend upon it I'll do every thing in my power to facilitate the accomplishment of your wishes.'

'Ten thousand thanks for your kindness,' said Osmond ; 'completely would it have lightened my heart, but for the unhappy beings in question. I will not, however, give way to despair about them. I have seen too many proofs of the goodness of Providence to permit me to doubt it in the present instance ; if it be its will they should escape the impending danger, I know they will, though walls of brass, and hosts of armed men, encompassed them.'

'No doubt,' cried Felisco ; 'if we did not indeed place confidence in the goodness of Heaven, we should be ill able to bear many things that happen in life.'... Then, after a transient pause, he added, as they had not any thing further of moment to converse on at present, they had better separate, lest a suspicion of their being together should be excited, and thus perhaps give rise to others that might be dangerous.

To the propriety of this measure, Osmond immediately assented ; but at the same time enquired whether there was a necessity for his returning yet awhile to the house ?

'By no means,' Felisco replied, 'as in the first place the night was here literally turned into day, and in the second, the light in which he had represented him to the gang, left him at full liberty to pursue his inclination.'

'He should then remain some time longer out,' Osmond said, 'as he was at present in too perturbed a state of mind to allow of his remaining quietly in one place.'

'Very well, Signor, as you please,' answered Felisco, taking, as he spoke, the arm of Mactalla, to make him accompany him to the hall, not conceiving it prudent to let him remain with his master.

'But that's true,' said Osmond, suddenly recollecting the circumstance, and detaining Felisco a few minutes longer, in order to have it explained to him, 'I nearly forgot to mention the alarm which some part of Mactalla's conduct in my chamber gave me.'

He then related what this was ; and in reply learnt,

that, like Macbeth, he had seen but an ideal dagger ; the instrument which he took for one in the hand of Mactalla being but a key, entrusted to him by Felisco, for the purpose of admitting himself into a remote part of the building, in which he had appointed to meet him, after his interview with his master, and which, for the better securing, Mactalla had drawn from his bosom on approaching the bed, and accidentally held in his hand, while groping about it.

On emerging from the building, Osmond happening to cast his eyes on the opposite terrace, upon which the moon shone full at the moment, was not a little startled at beholding the wall of it completely covered with armed men, whose weapons all appeared levelled against himself and his party.

‘ Good Heavens !’ he involuntarily exclaimed, ‘ are we then betrayed ? Yet if we are, what an extraordinary opinion must they have formed of us, to think it requisite to send such a number after us !’

‘ What do you mean, Signor ?’ asked Felisco, somewhat surprised.

‘ Mean !’ repeated Osmond, pointing across the court.

‘ What, you are speaking of the gentlemen yonder ?’ pursuing the direction of his eye. ‘ Ah, Signor,’ with a loud laugh, ‘ believe me you never set eyes on a more harmless set. In a word, Signor, they are made of what one has often reason to believe the human heart made of....stone, as a clearer light would at once have permitted you to see.’

Osmond could not help joining for a moment in the laugh, which both Mactalla and his friend enjoyed at his expence. They then separated.

Osmond, as soon as he was left to himself, proceeded to take the range of the solitary courts : but neither their stillness, nor yet the soft and shadowy light which prevailed throughout them, could impart a charm to soothe the anguish, to allay the agitation he experienced on account of the Raymonds. He continued wandering about like a troubled spirit, literally taking no rest or *note of time*, until the grey dawn of the eastern clouds *gradually began to redden* : soon after which the tramp-

ling of horses announcing the approach of the banditti, induced him to seek out a remote spot to secrete himself in from their observation. As soon as he was convinced they had entered the hall, and that of course he need fear no interruption from them, he ventured from his hiding-place, and as he did, was struck with mingled astonishment and awe at the splendid scene, rendered still more so by the rising sun striking full upon it, which the great body of the inner castle, surrounded with fair semicircular towers, proudly swelling to the eye, and magnificently adorned with pinnacles, statues, and battlements, presented to his view.

But with the admiration it inspired was mingled that feeling of regret and sadness, which a mind of taste and sensibility involuntarily experiences at beholding any superb monument of art sinking into decay, such as it was evident this noble edifice was hastening to. The ravages of time were every where discernible on it.... long grass overtopped its battlements, dusky weeds crept round its arches, and heaps of rubbish strewn its courts.

'Yes,' said Osmond, under the influence of the feeling just alluded to,

'Tears to mortality are not confined,
The fate of things affect the human mind.'

'But to this decay and desolation,' he continued, 'all the works of man, sooner or later, come; yet a little while, and the pile sinks to the dust, after the hand that raised it; the monument, which pride hoped would perpetuate its name for ever, drops into oblivion, like the name it was intended to record.'

From the contemplation of the building he strolled away to the magnificent woods that rose above it.

Fitter haunts for meditation than were these, he could not possibly conceive....so impervious were their shades, so profound their solitude; a death-like stillness seemed to prevail throughout them; nor stroke of sturdy axe, nor woodman's cheerful carol, here met the listening ear; nor blast of

.....'Folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cot,
Or sound of past'ral reed with oaten stops;
Or whistle from the lodge; or village cock.'

Here again the admiration of Osmond was excited, not only by the luxuriance of the trees, but the romantic borders of fragrant and beautiful shrubs, which he found scattered amongst them, and the fine views they, through partial openings, admitted of the castle, which, notwithstanding its crumbling turrets, still, in every direction, 'wore a warlike mien,' an air of sullen grandeur, highly impressive.

'As, midst the snow of age, a boastful air
Still on the war-worn vet'ran's brow attends;
Still his big bones his youthful prime declare,
Tho' trembling o'er the feeble crutch he bends.'

Anxious to ascertain whether, if they failed effecting their escape one way, there was any chance of accomplishing it another, Osmond made his way, though without the greatest difficulty, to the summit of one of these cliffs, whence a glance at the opposite side convinced him there was not the smallest, by discovering view an extensive lake.

At length he returned to the hall. The first object beheld on entering, was Felisco, who, hastily approaching him, said aloud....'You have had a long, and I hope pleasant, ramble, Signor;' then, in a lower tone, 'I have got the keys....follow me.'



CHAP. V.

'He star'd, and roll'd his haggard eyes around.'

OSMOND joyfully obeyed. On getting so far from the hall, Felisco stopt, and having looked about to see there was no one at hand to overhear them, 'I will myself attend you to the apartments,' cried he, 'as I find I shall not be wanted for some time.'

Osmond thanked him for his complaisance ; they then proceeded through several intricate passages to an immense folding-door, which throwing open, Osmond and himself in the rotunda they had previously visited : once they ascended the fan staircase to another door, which Felisco unlocking, discovered to the view of Osmond a magnificent apartment, which he stiled the salon, designed in the most elegant style of gothic architecture, and looking upon what had formerly been not only a spacious but delightful garden, and which still exhibited a beauty and richness highly attractive to the eye, and rendered still more so by the smiling contrast it formed to the dusky walls and battlements, begirt with ivy and long-streaming grass, which frowned above it.

From this apartment they entered a spacious drawing-room, which Felisco also had to unlock, and which they hastily passed through to a dining-room, the door of which, like those of the other apartments, was also secured.

Here, however, Felisco paused, and with something of the air of a master of the ceremonies.... ‘ Signor,’ said he, ‘ if an admirer of ancient grandeur, I advise you to look about you, as we proceed, since finer specimens of the kind than what this building affords can scarcely any where, I fancy, be met with.’

‘ True,’ replied Osmond, ‘ it is indeed altogether a noble pile. Pray can you inform me to whom it belonged, or the cause of its abandonment to its present possessors ?’

‘ Not exactly, Signor ; all I can inform you is, that it originally belonged to one of the first families in Italy.... that its last legal possessors deserted it in consequence of some dreadful catastrophe that took place in it....and that some years after, during which it remained without an inhabitant, owing to the terror and disgust this catastrophe caused it to be regarded with, its then proprietor was commanded by government to destroy it, since he did not choose to make it his abode, lest otherwise its neighbourhood should be rendered dangerous, owing to the refuge it was calculated to afford to banditti, from the loneliness and security of its situation. Instead, however, of obeying this command, he thought proper to dis-

through. Round this he now eagerly went, in quest of the entrance he was so anxious to obtain ; but though nothing could exceed the diligence of this search, nothing of the kind met his view. At length, after pausing a few minutes in absolute despair, he cast his eyes upon a large statue in a corner of it. Instantly occurred to him this might conceal the object of his search ; he accordingly approached it, and, though not without some difficulty, pushing it aside, discovered, to his unutterable transport, a large aperture, but, to his equal surprise, occupied at the moment by Mr. Raymond, muffled up exactly as he had seen him in the hall, and who instantly, as if struck by an invisible hand fell prostrate to the floor, with something like an exclamation of terror.

‘ For Heaven’s sake, Sir,’ cried Osmond, shocked as well as alarmed, and stooping, as he spoke, to raise him ‘ what is the matter ? are you ill ?’

‘ Ill !’ groaned the other in a voice scarce articulate, and resisting the effort Osmond made to assist him : ‘ Oh that it was but illness I had to complain of ! For what.... what are the pangs of the body, compared to those of the mind ? Gracious Heaven !’ he continued, with increasing vehemence, ‘ is then the dreadful hour of retribution arrived ? and, to aggravate, to render complete its horror is he.... he, now beside me, the instrument thou hast fixed on to avenge thee ? Oh, is there no shelter for this head no hope to cling to ?’

‘ I entreat, I conjure you, Sir,’ said Osmond, cruelly alarmed at the idea of all his benevolent intentions respecting the unfortunate man and his family being defeated by the desertion of his reason, for to this.... to sudden madness, he imputed the speech he had just uttered.... ‘ to compose yourself.’

‘ What !’ in a tone of the most malignant bitterness but without raising his head from the ground ‘ to give you an opportunity of gratifying your revenge, by the renewal of my tortures ?’

‘ Revenge !’ repeated Osmond. ‘ Pray try to reflect yourself, Sir. What revenge, stranger as you are to me, can you possibly have given rise to in my bosom ? But perhaps you mistake me for some other.... for one

of the wretches into whose power you have so unfortunately fallen : if so, the ladies certainly did not do me the honour of mentioning me to you ; for it was in their power to have informed you who I was.'

'They did not omit doing so ; but nevertheless I cannot help having.....'

'Some doubts to my prejudice,' hastily and with involuntary haughtiness, interrupted Osmond.

'I believe so : but swear to me, on your word, your honour, your immortal soul, you do not belong to the banditti, and perhaps I may give credit to your assertions.'

'In any other situation than the present, be assured, Sir, your doubting them would have prevented their being repeated ; but now pity and humanity predominate over offended pride. I therefore protest to you, by my hopes of happiness here and hereafter, I am in the same predicament here that you are yourself. But actions are the best proofs of a man's sincerity : know then, therefore, Sir, that I made my way to this forlorn apartment solely for the purpose of endeavouring to gain access to yours, and thus rescue you from the dreadful fate impending over you.'

'What ! is your hand then not armed with a dagger to pierce my heart ? Are you really then not deputed to take vengeance on me ?....on me, the.....'

'You shock me beyond expression, Sir,' cried Osmond, 'by continuing to speak in such a manner. Again I implore you (in the most energetic, the most vehement manner, as if it was for his very life he was pleading, he proceeded) to try and compose yourself. If you have any regard for yourself, your family, endeavour to collect your thoughts. The present moments are infinitely too precious to be wasted in useless arguments or idle exclamations, since they are the only ones, that promise to afford an opportunity of imparting circumstances to you absolutely essential to your safety to know.'

'Indeed !' exclaimed the other, in a somewhat more collected tone ; and immediately rising, but with his face covered with his handkerchief, he turned towards the wainscot, and leaning against it, motioned Osmond to proceed.

Osmond obeyed....briefly acquainting him with the deception practised on him, and the method adopted for his deliverance.

‘What a monster!’ cried Mr. Raymond, after listening to him with the most profound attention, but without once turning his face towards him; ‘but how ridiculous to rail at a villain, for proving himself a villain!’ Then, in a calmer tone, but still with his face averted....

‘And is it possible you can be anxious for my safety?’

‘Good Heavens!’ impatiently exclaimed Osmond; ‘after what I have done, what a question! Excuse me, Sir, for telling you, you must instantly, if you wish to profit by the exertions I have made for you, collect yourself.’

‘Pardon me,’ said Mr. Raymond, in an altered tone; ‘the question was occasioned by astonishment at your being so interested about me....me, of whom you have had so much reason to....to....of whom you have no knowledge, I mean,’ added he, as if confused.

‘True, Sir,’ replied Osmond, ‘I have no knowledge of you, at least that I am conscious of; but he must have a narrow heart indeed, who can only feel interested for those he knows. God forbid the charity of mine was so circumscribed! You are a stranger to me, ’tis true; but you are my fellow-being, and that is quite sufficient to give you a claim upon my best exertions.’

‘Which I accept with gratitude. At nine o’clock, you say, I may expect a summons from you.’

‘Exactly, if nothing unexpected occurs, which Heaven forbid. At all events, rely on it, no risque shall deter me from trying to serve you.’

He then entreated him to gloss over, as much as possible, to the ladies, the unpleasant circumstances he had unfolded to him, and to be cautious about speaking loud.

‘My dear young friend,’ returned Mr. Raymond, in quite a different voice to what he had before spoken in, one which proved his being now quite collected, ‘be assured there is but little occasion to give a man a caution when his own safety is concerned.’

He then acknowledged, but still without looking at Osmond, to the great surprise of the latter, that a suspicion of foul play had induced him to seek for a way of

ing his apartment, in hopes, if he discovered such, it
enable him to effect his deliverance.

Matters being now arranged between him and Os-
mond, he retreated to his prison; and Osmond, after he
for fear of accidents, replaced the statue, retraced his
to the fan staircase. As he slowly pursued this, his
involuntarily wandering about, he accidentally es-
a light closet off of one of the apartments. Curio-
induced him to enter it, and he found it strewed over
written papers: as he glanced over these, he disco-
a small roll of manuscript: he took it up, and, un-
g a little of it, found it written in Italian. He ran
a few lines, and had his curiosity so strongly excited
ese, as to be induced to deposit it in his pocket.

From the rotunda he immediately repaired to his
ber, there to remain till evening. The nearer it ap-
hed, spite of all his efforts to the contrary, the more
ed he became.

Not to fears for himself, but for the Raymonds,
wing the violent perturbation of his spirits. All his
to save them might be ineffectual, he reflected;
his soul sickened at the bare surmise.

'Merciful Heaven!' he exclaimed, as he involuntarily
ht on the fair Cordelia, 'can human form enshrine
t capable of meditating her destruction! But what-
be her fate in this mansion, I will share it.'

The impression she had made upon him, may per-
be imputed the deep interest he took in her fate, and
f her parents. But no....to ascribe it solely to such
se, would be to do him injustice, since it originated
tenderness and compassion of his nature, and would
been the same though he had not seen her, from
cern his disposition ever induced him to take in
oubles and disasters of his fellow-creatures, espe-
such as were really brought on by misfortune, to
arged upon no fault or indiscretion of the sufferer.
amities of this description, there always appeared
thing so interesting to him, that at the first glance
generally made them his own, and that not altogether
a reflection of their being such as he might have
ienced, or still experience, but chiefly from a cer-

tain generosity and sensibility of soul, which disposed him to compassion, abstracted from all considerations of self. In a word, when any thing of the kind came within his knowledge, his mind became captive at once, and surrendered itself to all the tender emotions of pity and regret.

Heavily wore away the hours he was destined to pass by himself. At length the sinking of the sun behind the tall trees of the forest announced the one at hand in which he expected Felisco. He was punctual to his appointment, and came accompanied by Mactalla.

'Well, Signor,' he softly exclaimed, as soon as the door was closed, 'the gang set off at the time I expected.'

'And ever since,' cried Mactalla, 'we have been busied in overcoming some of our difficulties, by making the guards at the outer portal drunk. Praise be to St. Benedict, we did not find it a very troublesome undertaking; and now they lie, bound hand and foot, as cosy as possible, in a dungeon of one of the towers, where they may roar long enough before any one in this part of the building can hear them: but lest the devil should drive some one towards them, we had better, as every thing is now ready for our escape, not defer it.'

'Assuredly,' returned Osmond; 'and now let me inform you that I was successful in discovering the private entrance I went in search of this morning, and that our fellow-prisoners are prepared to join us the moment we call upon them.'

'Signor,' said Felisco, in a grave voice, and with a clouded countenance, 'I am, I assure you, extremely anxious for their deliverance; but notwithstanding, cannot help thinking, from certain reflections that have occurred since we parted this morning, that it is advisable for us to leave them behind.'

'Leave them behind!' repeated Osmond, in an accent of horror.

'Yes, Signor, owing to the danger that will attend their accompanying us in our flight.'

'Danger!' said Osmond, again echoing his words, and with a keenly-enquiring glance.

'Yes, Signor, danger. In a few minutes a man will

repair to their apartment with supper ; and should he find any difficulty in obtaining admission, or not perceive them in it at the first glance, measures will immediately be taken that in all probability will prevent our escape.'

'Why are we not armed?' demanded Osmond.

'Because, Signor, 'tis not in our power to procure arms, the Captain having the key of the armory in his own possession. All things, therefore, taken into consideration, I really think, Signor, you had better leave those unhappy strangers to their fate.'

'No, by Heaven!' exclaimed Osmond, in the most impassioned tone, and with uplifted hands and eyes, as if calling upon Heaven to attest his vow, 'No! though I even was not as much interested about them as, from knowing them, I am, since to abandon them, after the hopes I have inspired, the dangers I have unfolded, would make me look upon myself as a greater wretch than any one of the monsters who have imprisoned them. But think not,' he added, perceiving Felisco look alarmed, 'that it is my intention to involve you in any danger on their account. I will myself take their place in the tower ; and by answering the centinel, in a feigned voice, trust I shall prevent any of the consequences you apprehend. For fear of the worst, however, delay not a moment making your escape, after they have joined you ; and as soon as I think you are beyond these dangerous walls, I will endeavour to accomplish mine : but remember, I positively interdict your waiting longer for me than fifteen minutes ; if by the expiration of that time, I am not with you, depend on it something unforeseen has occurred, and act accordingly.'

'Oh, my dear master!' cried Mactalla, sobbing, 'I cannot think of leaving you....cannot think of your running the risk of your life, for people who are, as one may say, perfect strangers to you.'

'I am determined,' said Osmond ; 'and equally determined that, in the present instance, no one shall run any risk but myself. Do not despond, however, my good fellow,' added he, looking gratefully at Mactalla ; 'I ever have, and ever shall, believe that an especial Providence watches over the safety of those who incur danger

through motives of benevolence : but come, these precious minutes are fleeting fast,' taking up the lamp, which Felisco had set on the table, as he spoke, and desiring him to lead on to the fan staircase.

' Here,' cried he, as soon as the door opening into the suit of apartments this led to was unlocked, ' wait for me, my friends. I'll take care you shall not be detained long.'

He accordingly hurried forward, and was pleased to find Mr. Raymond and his family anxiously waiting his approach in the chamber communicating with the tower. He briefly explained the way they were to go, and bade them be as expeditious as possible.

Mr. Raymond, on receiving his instructions, kissed his hand to him, with an air of the greatest impatience ; and taking the lamp from him with one hand, and that of his daughter with the other, moved on....but Mrs. Raymond lingered.

' Are you not coming with us ?' asked she, in an anxious tone, and with a corresponding look.

' I will follow you, Madam,' replied Osmond, somewhat evasively.

' Nay, I would much rather not proceed without you. I.....'

' Mrs. Raymond, I am astonished how you can be so ridiculous,' in an angry voice, exclaimed Mr. Raymond, and pausing for an instant.

' Go on, go on, Madam, I conjure you,' cried Osmond ; ' trust me, in a few minutes I hope we shall be mutually congratulating one another on our fortunate escape from this den of thieves.'

Mrs. Raymond, but with evident reluctance, obeyed ; and the moment she was out of sight, Osmond, stepping through the aperture, took possession of the apartment she had vacated.

Scarcely had he done so, when he heard several efforts made to open the door, which he had bolted on the inside, and directly after a hoarse voice vociferating....
' What ho ! Signor, what the devil have you done to the door, that I can't open it ?'

' I have bolted it,' replied Osmond, imitating, as near-

ly as he could recollect, the tones of Mr. Raymond, 'as the ladies, being fatigued, are undressing to lay down.'

'Well, I shall wait quietly a few minutes longer, and then I shall hope you'll admit me, as I am in a d....mnd hurry to go to my supper.'

'Oh, why,' involuntarily thought Osmond, with a heart swelling with indignation, 'why does the known justice of the Supreme Being permit him to let such wretches as these exist? Why sleeps the thunder idle in His hand, when it could so easily blast them?'....He started, he recollected himself....'Forgive,' he cried, 'O forgive! Thou, whose ways experience and observation never fail of justifying, the involuntary reflection of a disturbed mind. This life would not be the state of discipline it is....such as, for the improvement of our nature, 'tis requisite for us all to pass through....but for the mixture of bad men with good in society. The crimes of the former bring forward the virtues of the latter....all those suffering virtues, which otherwise would have no field for action; and by the exercise of which the human character is not only tried and purified, but acquires some of its chief honours. Were there no bad men in the world to harass and distress the good, the good might appear in the light of harmless innocents, but could have no opportunity of displaying fidelity, magnanimity, patience, and fortitude; one half of virtue, and that not the least important half, would be lost to the world, since, in our present imperfect state, any virtue that is not exercised, is in danger of becoming extinct. If goodness constantly proceeded in a smooth and flowery path....if, meeting with no adversity to oppose it....if it was surrounded on every side with acclamation and praise....would there be no ground to dread its being corrupted by vanity or sinking into indolence?'

Here his reflections were interrupted by the ruffian at the door exclaiming still more impatiently than before....'Why, Signor, I say, an't the ladies undressed yet? If I am kept much longer here, the capon I have brought for their supper will be quite cold, and, what is worse, the fellow of it, which I have prepared for my own. Come, come, Signor, (thundering at the door,) admit me, I say.'

‘Have patience for a few minutes longer, I beg,’ said Osmond. Then, pursuing the thread of his reflections... ‘Yes,’ cried he, mentally, ‘it is necessary this dangerous calm should be disturbed; the waters must be troubled, lest they should stagnate and putrify.’

‘Why, Signor, hollo! again, I say,’ cried the ruffian, ‘are the ladies ill, that they are so silent? I have not heard them speak since I have been here.’

‘They are not always disposed for conversation,’ returned Osmond.

‘For women, that’s a wonder I am sure,’ returned the other, with a loud laugh. Then, in a more brutal tone... ‘Let them be disposed for what they may, I shall wait here no longer: so, Signor, if you do not immediately unbolt the door, I shall make free to burst it open.’

‘Patience another minute, I implore you,’ said Osmond.

‘Patience to the devil,’ returned he, and Osmond heard him apply his foot to the door.

To defer, therefore, another minute making his escape, was not to be thought of; and besides, by this time he flattered himself his friends had effected theirs. Accordingly, he hurried from the apartment, and hastily traversing the others he had to cross, carefully locked the door which enclosed the suite, and, passing the fan staircase, descended by another to the hall.

To his inexpressible joy he found it unoccupied. He darted forward, and gaining the door, made an effort to open it; but how impossible to paint his anguish, his emotion, at finding it resist his effort...at finding it locked, and the key taken out.

For an instant he was overpowered by the greatness of the shock this untoward circumstance gave him. Then recollecting himself...recollecting that fortitude and coolness might do something, despair and agitation nothing, he looked around him to try whether he could perceive any other outlet by which to escape, but without being able to discover any thing of the kind, the windows being all too high to admit a hope of effecting it that way, and the doors leading into passages, of the intricacies of which he was too well apprized to suppose he could make his way through them.

He considering what he should do, a small door, great distance from the principal one, and which not before noticed, owing to its being made to oblige a pannel, flew open, and a man rushing in he court slapt it to, and set his back against it. Osmond involuntarily started, and was retreating to the nearest passage, as the only means of avoidance conceived, immediate destruction, when his way was arrested by the ruffian exclaiming....‘Ho, that you, Ossuna? Curse me if I can well see, I got such a confounded giddiness in my head: you believe it (hiccupping violently,) the hall dancing round me.’

His fainting spirits of Osmond revived; he perceived the ruffian was in a state of complete intoxication, and uttered himself, from this circumstance, he should say or other be able to render him subservient to escape.

Accordingly, collecting himself, and retiring behind the pillars....‘And prythee to what may that giddiness be owing?’ asked he, imitating the gruff tone of a dog, which he perfectly recollected.

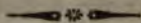
‘You comical dog,’ cried the other, half laughing, hiccupping, ‘to as natural a cause as any in the world...to that jolly rogue Felisco, and his friend Mac-our new comrade, having prevailed on me to assist in emptying too many flasks of Burgundy. You what Ossuna, I can see clearly we shall have good things here in future, from the companions we have got. By the Lord, if there be not a good vintage year, we shall be in a bad way, for our cellars will be low, I’m certain; and no wonder....since such as they contain would make even a Mussleman...but what the devil are you doing there stuck up to that dusty pillar?’

‘May as well ask what you are doing at that door?’ said he, in my advice, and as your head is giddy, sit down.’ ‘Oh, you dog, ask me to leave my post! But no, I leave it.’

‘That! not to assist in emptying another flask?’ ‘Oh, you unconscionable dog!’ hiccupped the other.

‘No, I deny being unconscionable,’ returned Osmond; ‘consider I was not of your party with Felisco.’

‘True, true, that’s very true, comrade, and therefore I retract my words. Yes, yes, I see you are not unconscionable; and so, d’ye see, as soon as I can get one of the rascals from above to take my post here, I am your man.’



CHAP. VI.

‘Great minds, like Heav’n, are pleas’d with doing good;
Tho’ the ungrateful subjects of their favours
Are barren in return. Virtue does still
With scorn the mercenary world regard;
Where abject souls do good, and hope reward:
Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise;
But with herself, herself the goddess pays’

ROWE’S TAMERLANE.

‘STUFF, stuff!’ somewhat impatiently, said the pretended Ossuna; ‘don’t you trouble your head, man, about that door; I’ll take care of it for you.’

‘You! thank you; but I’ll not quit my post until I am regularly relieved; for that rascal Tivoli owes me a grudge, and would be glad, I know (hiccoughing,) to have an opportunity of doing me an injury with our Captain.’

‘But why can’t I relieve you as well as he?’

‘You! why d....mn it, Ossuna, you sly dog, you must to a certainty have been taking a flask too much yourself, to ask me such a question. You stupid dolt, don’t you know that you are appointed cook this night, and have to prepare supper against the troop returns?’

‘Ah, true, true; but pray, comrade, can you inform me why the great door, contrary to usual custom, is locked to-night?’

‘Yes, yes, I’ll tell you all about that. As I was taking my rounds as usual, like a careful watchman as I am,

I spied the key on the outside; but how the devil it came there, is more than I can inform you, or puzzle my head to guess, but so it was. Ha, ha! said I, as soon as I saw it, this does not look right; so I whipt it out, and put it into my pocket: here it is,' producing a tremendous key.

'Yes, so I perceive; but had you not better return it to the door? for it must be cumbersome, and besides may otherwise be mislaid.'

'No, comrade, no,' provokingly thrusting it again into his pocket, 'I shall keep it till the Captain comes back, to convince him that though I do now and then do what he accuses me of....take a cheerful glass or so, I never inundate my brains sufficiently to prevent my knowing what I am about.'

To the consternation of Osmond, the alarm-bell now rang out.

'Hey-day, why what the devil's the matter,' exclaimed the other, after listening a minute, with a vacant stare; 'surely the rascals in the north tower, and their prisoners, can't be scuffling; but if so, one should think they might do without ringing for assistance.'

'But I suppose they can't,' said Osmond; 'you had better, therefore, hasten to them.'

'Hasten! hasten! to quit my post! d....mn me, Ossuna, if you desire me to do so again, but I shall suspect you of some foul design.'

Voices now sounded at no great distance.

'Nay then,' said Osmond to himself, 'nothing but a desperate effort remains for me.'

He accordingly rushed upon the ruffian, and seizing him by the collar, dragged him from the door, but was prevented retreating through it by his, in his turn, also seizing him. A violent struggle now took place between them, the villain being uncommonly athletic, and besides not so stupidly drunk as not to guess the intentions of Osmond, on finding himself collared by him, and perceiving that he was not the person he supposed.

Desperation, however, nerving the arm of Osmond, he at length succeeded in getting him to the ground; but at the same instant had the mortification of having one

of his legs seized by him. The eyes of Osmond kindled, his breathing became nearly suspended, he stooped and pulling from the girdle of the wretch one of the pistols with which it was stuck, held it in a threatening attitude to his head.

This action had the desired effect....he was immediately released; and hastening to the door, passed out, and turned the key.

He speedily gained the vaulted passage in the outer court; but scarcely had he done so, ere he paused in consternation at perceiving two shadows at the entrance which gradually retiring as he advanced, led him to imagine he was in danger of being waylaid within it. This horrible surmise made him stand for a minute in suspense before it. An exulting shout, and the steps of pursuit behind him, then again urged him forward. As he proceeded, a heap of rubbish obstructed the path, and caused him to stumble: on recovering himself, he distinguished the panting of his pursuers. Still, however, he pressed forward, though now almost hopeless of reaching the wished-for goal. At length it appeared in sight; but at the same instant two men darted to it from a recess in the wall. He now gave himself up for lost, and, pausing felt the skirt of his coat instantly seized behind. The effort, however, that was made to drag him back was rendered abortive by the still more violent one that, at the same moment, was made by these two men to drag him forward. They succeeded in theirs; and, hastily clapping to the portal against the ruffians, who were rushing after them, locked it, and flung away the key.

'Now we are safe, we are safe,' shouted Mactalla, in a transport of joy, and who, together with his friend Felisco, had thus ventured to the assistance of Osmond, his delay in joining them having excited dreadful apprehensions for his safety; 'blessed be St. Benedict for your deliverance.'

'I trust I never shall forget the gratitude I owe to Heaven for it,' said Osmond; and hurrying over the drawbridge, he found, in a little sequestered glade among the trees, at the opposite side of the lawn, the Raymonds together with the little French boy, whom Felisco had

also contrived to get from the castle, and horses prepared for the whole party.

'Thank Heaven,' in the most animated tone, exclaimed Mrs. Raymond, hastily advancing from beneath the deep shadow of the trees to meet Osmond the moment he appeared, we see you again in safety: had you fallen a victim to your too great generosity (for the risk you ran on our account has been explained to us,) never, never would the liberty purchased at so dear a rate have afforded me happiness.'

Osmond bowed....to speak at the moment was not in his power, so deeply was he affected by this grateful acknowledgment, the recollection of all he had lately gone through, of all he had been instrumental in preventing.

'Stuff! stuff!' exclaimed Mr. Raymond, following her steps with his daughter, and in a tone indicative of high displeasure; 'this is no time for compliments.'

'We certainly should not linger here,' said Felisco; 'for there is no knowing the moment when some of the banditti may return.'

'And again I say,' cried Mr. Raymond, thereby implying they had been arguing the point before, 'the direct road to Naples is the one we must take.'

'My God, Sir,' said Felisco, in the most impatient accent, 'have I not already explained to you the reasons which should deter us from taking that....explained to you, that to a certainty that is the one in which we shall be pursued by the banditti, the other being so intricate and tedious, that they'll never dream of our having chosen it?'

'And pray,' in the haughtiest voice imaginable, 'do you think I troubled myself to attend to your stupid explanations? Again I say, the straight road to Naples is the only one I will take.'

'Then, by all the saints in the calendar, you must find your way to it yourself; for curse me,' cried Felisco, not a little exasperated by the supercilious manner in which he had been treated by him, 'if I hazard my life, to gratify your whim in conducting you to it.'

'Pray, pray,' supplicated his lady, 'be persuaded to give up a determination so inimical to our safety. I

shall die with terror if you persist in it, after the danger I have heard of its being likely to expose us to.'

'Do, my dear father, do,' entreated his lovely daughter, but in a trembling voice, and attempting, as she sought to clasp his arm, which, however, she was prevented doing, by his rudely, or rather brutally, pushing her from him.

Osmond, recovering from the emotion which had for an instant impeded his utterance, could no longer refrain from interfering.

'Pardon me, Sir,' said he, addressing himself to Mr. Raymond, but in a tone expressive of the indignation his obstinacy, insolence, and inhumanity had excited, 'I am acknowledging myself amazed at your conduct...amazed that, at a moment like the present, you can yield to any other feelings than those of benevolence.'

'And pray, Sir,' haughtily inquired the other, 'what is there in my conduct so amazing? Is it my not attending to idle arguments on one hand, and silly fears on the other, that occasions you such surprise?'

'It is your not regarding just arguments and natural fears, Sir,' replied Osmond, in a tone not less haughty than his own, 'which so astonishes and disgusts me, and now induces me to tell you, in a more peremptory manner than I could have wished to have done, that the resolution which our deliverer here (pointing to Felisco) wishes to pursue, is the only one that shall be taken.'

'Shall I?' repeated the other, drawing back, and evidently swelling with rage and resentment; 'permit me, Sir, to inform you, this is a kind of language I have never been accustomed to hear.'

'Nor I to use, Sir,' cried Osmond; 'but never, when I am convinced, as in the present case, that I am right, shall my language be less decisive.'

'Oh drop, for Heaven's sake, this altercation,' said Mrs. Raymond, drawing nearer to him; 'while arguing in this manner, we may be surprised: and how, he then would you have to reproach yourself,' she added, looking earnestly at him, 'since to you alone would it be owing?'

'Prepare the horses, Felisco,' said Osmond; 'another minute must not be wasted.'

The horses were immediately brought forward; and Miss Raymond being nearer to him at the moment than her mother, he first offered her his hand to assist her in mounting. Her accepting it, however, was prevented by her father rudely interposing between them. He seized her hand himself... 'And we have already occasioned you so much trouble, Sir,' cried he, Osmond could not help thinking in a sneering tone, 'that any services my daughter may require, I shall render her myself.'

Osmond, with a slight inclination of his head, immediately drew back, so piqued, so irritated, as to resolve from that moment to hold no further converse with this ungrateful man and his family.

'Tis by means of such characters as his,' said he, mentally, as with a heart swelling with offended pride and just indignation he turned from him, 'that the mind by degrees is rendered callous to the pleadings of humanity, and men acquire a misanthropical turn. I will, therefore, shun, diligently shun, such, whenever they come across my path, in order to avoid the perversion of my feelings, the destruction of all the social charities of my nature, from the exercise of which man derives his highest enjoyment.'

As he stood adjusting the bridle of his horse, he felt his arm gently pressed behind; and turning round beheld Mrs. Raymond at his elbow.

'You are offended,' said she, 'I see you are offended; if you continue so, I shall be quite unhappy. Oh, if you could look into my heart, you would there (she added, in the most energetic tone) discover sentiments which would, I make no doubt, appease your, I acknowledge, just resentment... you would then find, that ingratitude is not the vice of all. Yet let me not say ingratitude.... no, no, 'tis from pettishness the expressions dropt which offended you.'

Osmond, who knew not what it was in his own bosom to involve the innocent with the guilty, perpetuate the memory of injuries, or keep alive the flame of resentment, warmly, though respectfully, pressed her hand between his, and conjured her (the cloud of passion va-

nishing from his brow, and his fine countenance regaining all its wonted openness) to think no more of what had passed, assuring her he should give it no place in his remembrance.

'A thousand, thousand thanks,' cried she, in the most grateful accent, 'for this assurance.'

Then permitting him to lead her to her horse, he assisted her on it; and the party set off, Felisco leading the way, and Osmond and Mactalla bringing up the rear.

The intricacies and difficulties of the way they deemed it expedient to pursue, the expedition they were anxious to make, and the agitation they were naturally in, precluded all further conversation for some time. At length, after a long silence, Mactalla motioned to his master to slacken his speed a little, and upon his obeying.... 'By St. Benedict,' cried he, in a low voice, 'but you risked your life, Signor, for a bad man,' pointing, as he spoke, to Mr. Raymond, who rode close to his daughter, and apparently regardless of all but her and himself. 'Would you believe it?...that ungrateful villain (for he deserves no other appellation) wanted Felisco and me not to wait for you, saying he was certain you could not escape, and at all events, whether you did or not, it was not fair that so many persons should endanger their lives for the sake of one.'

'Gracious Heaven!' exclaimed Osmond, in a tone of horror, 'is it possible?'

'Why, Signor, I wouldn't try to make the devil himself appear blacker than he really is; but I don't wonder at your almost doubting what I have told you, since to be sure it seems almost incredible that any man should be vile enough to disregard the safety of the person who was risking it on their account; and by the Powers I made no bones in telling him so: if ever he got a good dressing, he got it from Felisco and me.'

'And the ladies,' anxiously demanded Osmond, 'were they equally uninterested about me?'

'They! Oh, blessings on them, not at all. If you had been the nearest and dearest friend they had in the world, they couldn't have felt more for you than they

seemed to do. His lady, though I am sure she is afraid of him, and no wonder, for I am certain he is a tyrant in his heart, made no scruple of reproaching him for his cruelty and ingratitude, in thinking of serving you in such a manner; and as to his daughter, her pretty eyes never shed so many tears before, I dare say; for at first, both she and her mother appeared apprehensive of our acting as he wished.'

'Well, for the honour of human nature, I am glad to hear they do not resemble him,' said Osmond; 'I will hope and believe, in order to prevent my being disgusted with it, that but few could be found who do.'

'And moreover, Signor,' rejoined Mactalla, 'it was he to a certainty that turned the key in the hall door; but whether owing to accident or design, I cannot pretend to say.'

'Oh, most assuredly to accident,' returned Osmond, with quickness; 'for what motive could he possibly have for wishing my destruction?'

'Why, that's true, Signor; that's a question I have asked myself; and as I cannot answer it in a satisfactory manner, I am inclined to think as you do in this instance. Heaven knows it was bad enough his thinking so little of you, without doing any thing he thought could injure you.'

To this observation Osmond only replied by shaking his head; and again they rode on in silence.

Previous to this information, Osmond had been endeavouring to reason himself out of the prejudice he had conceived against Mr. Raymond, in consequence of his haughty and obstinate deportment, by reflecting, that the best of men had frequently contradictory qualities in their dispositions, and at times acted in so strange and unaccountable a manner, as completely to shadow all their virtues; and besides that, great allowances should be made for a person situated as he understood him to be.... not only compelled to quit his native country, but in all probability tortured by remorse for the act which had obliged him to do so. But now any longer to combat against this, he found to be impossible; and so strong, so decided did it become, that, but for the consideration

of his amiable companions, he would have had no hesitation in resolving from this moment to keep entirely apart from him.

From any ostentatious display of gratitude for the service he had rendered him, the risk he had run on his account, he would have shrunk embarrassed and distressed; but some faint appearance of it would have been gratifying to his feelings, from the proof it would have afforded of his generosity not having been exercised for an unworthy character.

Though his resentment against Mr. Raymond could not be subdued, it was much allayed when he reflected on the pain his conduct towards him evidently gave his wife and daughter; and on their account, as much as possible, he resolved on concealing his feelings: on the latter by degrees his thoughts solely turned; and with a transport impossible to be described, he dwelt on the idea of the deliverance he had afforded her, or rather on the idea of the sentiments it had perhaps excited in her bosom for him.

Quickly, however, did the delicious sensations inspired by the idea of these yield to the recollection of the obstacles which want of fortune threw in the way of a union with her; and again he accused himself of selfishness, for wishing to inspire her, or deriving pleasure from the thoughts of having done so, with sentiments of a tender nature for him....again resolved to punish himself for so doing, by having no further communication with her than was absolutely necessary.

CHAP. VII.

'Disdain has swell'd him up.....
Sullen and dumb, and obstinate to death,
No signs of pity in his face appear :
Cramm'd with his pride, he leaves no room within
For sighs to issue out, or love to enter in.'

JUST as day began to dawn, the party emerged from the confines of the forest, and crossing a plain, thinly dotted with trees, entered upon a valley of considerable extent, bounded by and winding a way something like a meandering river, amongst mountains of various size and form ; some, from their frightful chasms and gloomy caverns, shagged with thorn, and shaded with the darkest foliage, appeared only fit haunts for the prowling wolf, or midnight sons of plunder....others, with gentler aspect, rose from the vale ; here, clad with stately forests, there, swelling into grassy hillocks, or sinking into dells, o'erloft by towering and projecting rocks, the grey tints of which were beautifully contrasted by the bright verdure of the pines that waved over them, and the silvery rills that trickled down their sides, as if to nourish the moss and wild plants with which they were tufted. Here mountain torrents were seen rushing down stupendous precipices, now disappearing amidst tangled thickets, then again bursting on the view, in a sheet of foam, as if eager to gain the tranquil mazes of the vale beneath, where aromatic shrubs and flowers intermingled their beauties, and gave new sweetness to the breath of morning.

As the rising sun gradually unfolded this scenery to the view of the travellers, the heart of Osmond swelled with gratitude to Him who had given him again to hail the glories of the opening day in safety, and gaze again, without fear or molestation, on the extensive landscape.

Revived by the balmy freshness of the air, cheered by the matin hymns of unnumbered birds, and at every step contrasting his present with his recent situation, *Osmond felt as if he had recovered all his wonted cheer-*

ty; but, like the Marchesa Morati, though unpossessed of these, she would still have been attractive, so possessing were her manners, so dignified her air and deportment.

Convinced, from the assurances of Felisco, that they were in perfect safety in their present situation, she entered into a cheerful conversation with Osmond, intuitive at once of a liberal and accomplished mind, to which neither her husband nor daughter participated. Both sat behind her, and at some distance; and to the astonishment of Osmond, as he could not suppose she was under any apprehension of unpleasant consequences ensuing from his now being seen, the former still continued muffled up in such a manner, that not a feature was visible.

That his silence was premeditated, he made no doubt; but that the fair Cordelia's proceeded from aught but dread of him, he could not imagine, owing to a glance or two, which, in spite of the interposition of her father, he caught.

At the request of Mrs. Raymond, he gave not a succinct account of the manner in which he had fallen into the hands of the banditti, but of the circumstances to which his visiting Naples were owing. On his concluding.... 'Your narrative may with truth,' said she, 'be styled one of the most disastrous chances.... one which has the singular effect of at once softening and strengthening the mind, since, while it affects the feelings, it inspires fortitude, by proving that there is no danger, no difficulty almost, which resolution and patience may not overcome.'

She then in her turn, informed him, that at the moment of the wood in which he and his attendants had taken refuge from the storm, they had been surprised by the banditti, she could not help thinking owing to the treachery of their servants, as, though armed and numerous, they made not an effort to defend them, nor had one of them been seized by the troop.

At length Osmond arose and withdrew, in order to afford Mrs. Raymond and her fair daughter an opportunity of enjoying a little repose.

Lost in thought, he strolled further into the wood, without reflecting on the necessity there was for his endeavouring to obtain some himself. His dislike to Mr. Raymond strengthened, he almost believed; beyond the possibility of being subdued, owing to the unaltered coldness, or rather fastidiousness of his manner, and which he was again tempted to ascribe solely to an ungracious temper, too callous to feel gratitude, and too proud to acknowledge an obligation. But with the indignation and resentment he felt against him for his conduct was mingled something like pity; for of how many exquisite enjoyments must his yielding to such a temper debar him, he thought....domestic pleasure, the consolations of friendship, the silent satisfaction resulting from the consciousness of being esteemed....yes, the man who harboured such a one could not fail (he inwardly exclaimed) of being an enemy to his own happiness.

At last, completely overpowered by fatigue, he threw himself at the root of an old tree, which dipt its trembling and far-extended boughs into a brook that babbled by, and gradually sunk into a transient slumber, lulled by the soft rustling of the foliage, and the ceaseless hum of warming insects, not undelightful

* To him who muses through the woods at noon;
Or drowsy shepherd, as he lies reclin'd,
With half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade
Of willows grey, close crowding o'er the brook.*

From this he awoke refreshed, and retracing his way to the bower, stopt within some yards of it, in consequence of seeing Miss Raymond seated near the brow of the hill, beneath the shade of some tall and clustering trees; her back towards him, and she appeared buried in thought.

What would he not have given at the moment to have been able to have looked into her heart, as Ariel was into that of Belinda's?

A fear of appearing intrusive....that modesty which is generally reckoned the companion of genuine love, and certainly always of sensibility....withheld him from approaching her: but though he was able to resist the im-

pulse which would have led him to her side, he was not able to prevail on himself to quit a spot where, without incurring the imputation of impertinence, he could indulge himself in gazing on her.. but the pleasure he derived from this was not unalloyed, as he silently observed her and involuntarily reflected on the happiness the man must enjoy, who should call such a treasure his. He also reflected, his thoughts recurring to the apparent sternness of her father, on the probability there was of her not experiencing herself the felicity she was so capable of bestowing, and deserving of possessing....he sighed at the idea....sighed to think she might be forced into the arms of age and ugliness....doomed to become the partner of some sordid wretch, intent only on his own gratification.

An accidental movement of her head discovering him to her, interrupted his reflections; he directly approached her, and, with a glow upon his cheek, not less bright at the moment than that which suffused hers, expressed his apprehension of having startled her, as, upon seeing him, she had hastily risen.

‘No,’ she replied, only surprised her, as she did not expect to see him at the moment. Then added, that unable to rest, owing to the impression recent incidents had made upon her mind, she had quitted the shady cover in which he had left her, in order to indulge herself with the contemplation of the surrounding scenery....‘In which, I fancy,’ continued she, ‘you were quite absorbed at the moment I discovered you.’

‘I was indeed,’ said Osmond, raising involuntarily his eyes to hers, ‘absorbed at that moment in the contemplation of one of the loveliest objects in creation.’

‘Indeed!’ she replied, with a deeper blush, and a lurking smile, which implied her better understanding the import of his words than she appeared willing to let him imagine; ‘where there are so many, as in the present instance, I should think it rather a difficult matter to select a particular one.’

‘By no means,’ said Osmond; ‘the one I allude to is so superlatively lovely, that I think it next to impossible any one could hesitate in giving it a decided preference.’

‘Well, perhaps so,’ she returned, with carelessness.

but a carelessness which Osmond could not help thinking more feigned than felt.

The conversation now turned upon the enchanting prospects stretched around them, which brought to his mind, Osmond said, the delightful shades of Acerenza.

'Ah! delightful shades indeed,' echoed Miss Raymond, with a sigh.

'Yes, by me they will ever be regarded as such,' said Osmond; 'since it was amongst them I first beheld.....'

He paused, suddenly recollected himself, and looked confused.

Miss Raymond appeared not less so; and from this circumstance Osmond was convinced she perfectly comprehended what he had been on the point of saying.

After a moment of evidently painful embarrassment on both sides, she motioned to return to the recess, but was prevented by the unexpected approach of her mother.

'My dear girl,' she exclaimed, in hurried accents, 'you have caused me inexpressible terror, by quitting my side.'

Miss Raymond expressed the greatest regret for having done so, since the occasion of alarm to her; accounting to her as she had previously done to Osmond, for having quitted their shady covert.

'I cannot wonder indeed,' replied Mrs. Raymond, 'at the impression made upon your imagination by recent scenes. I trust now,' smiling a little archly, 'you have had quite enough of the terrific..... You must know Mr. Munro,' turning and addressing herself to him, 'this young lady took it into her head, owing to the perusal of romances, to wish to find herself the inhabitant of some dilapidated mansion, where she would be likely to lose herself in old corridors, marble halls, and subterraneous passages.....in short, have the sublime sensation of terror every instant awakened in her mind; and no one will deny, I believe, that this wish has been accomplished.'

'Yes, but my dear mother,' returned Miss Raymond, blushing and half-smiling, 'to have rendered our adven-

tures truly horrific and romantic, we should have a spectre, and met with a mutilated manuscript.'

'Well, Madam,' said Osmond, 'though I cannot plete them in one way, by raising a spectre, I can in ther, by producing such a manuscript as you allude suddenly recollecting the one he had picked up i castle.

'Really?' said Miss Raymond, with quickness; pray what are its contents?

'That, Madam, I cannot say, as I have not yet time to look over it.'

Mrs. Raymond enquired how he had met with it on being informed.... 'Well,' said she, 'I acknowl my curiosity is so awakened, that, as we are here in fect safety, and will not, you know, recommence our ney for some hours, I should like, if not disagreeal you, to hear it.'

Osmond, bowing, assured her he was happy be expression at having an opportunity of obliging her.

They seated themselves on the spot Miss Rayt had just before occupied, and which was exactly st one as the poet has described,

.....'The sunless side
Of a romantic mountain, forest-crown'd.'

Osmond hastily ran his eye over the manuscript, t sure himself there was nothing in it improper for ear, and having satisfied himself there was not, and pared them for numerous breaks in the narrative, c sioned by that cormorant Time, thus began:....

CHAP. VIII.

TO LAURA MARTINELLI.

'AT the moment in which we were bid each other adieu, you charged me, my dear Laur write to you, and give you an account of the sta

though solitary, edifice, in which my ruined fortunes have occasioned me to take refuge, in order to avoid the manifold injuries and indignities which persons of low pride and illiberal minds are but too apt to heap upon those who have unexpectedly fallen from a height that once provoked their envy....above all, you charged me to give you the particulars of the event of which you say you have hitherto only been able to glean imperfect information, to which its desertion to a few domestics is owing; not doubting my being able to collect these for you, in consequence of being on the spot where that event happened.

‘Your commands must ever meet with obedience from me; and in conformity to them I now take up my pen.

‘The castle of Clarizio, whose solemn echoes, after long slumbering, the sighs of my grief have again awakened, is at this period just such a retreat as despair would wish to make choice of....a proud record of the taste of former times, a melancholy monument of the antiquity and greatness of the family to which it belongs.

It stands upon the banks of a rapid river, which produces a melancholy noise, owing to rocks that in many places cause it to fret and murmur in its course. On every side aspiring shades surround it, amidst whose deep recesses, ravens, and other ill-omened birds, lodge securely. Ruin and desolation every where encompass it: its stately towers are decayed, its battlements are broken; ivy enwreaths its windows, and the long grass waves where once the conquering banner hung: in the furniture, or once gorgeous ornaments, scarce a vestige of former magnificence remains; and the few aged domestics who inhabit it, seem, like the building itself, bending beneath the influence of that destroying power which conquers all. From them I have gathered the particulars you desire to be acquainted with.

‘The Marchese Montana was an only child. He was naturally of a haughty and vindictive spirit; and the evil propensities, which by proper attention, might have

been subdued, were encreased and finally confirmed false indulgence and pernicious flattery.

He was just emerging into manhood, when a contagious disorder carried off both his parents, and thus left him uncontrolled master of his own actions. Ardent in his passions, he hesitated not to avail himself, to its fullest extent, of the liberty he had thus prematurely acquired...immediately entering upon a course of dissipation which he persevered in for years, to the great detriment of his morals, health, and character. At length satiety began to prevail: he grew disgusted with all that had formerly delighted him, and in consequence resolved on marrying, and withdrawing from the scenes that had long witnessed his excesses.

About the period he formed this resolution, fame began to blazon forth the charms and accomplishments of the Count Clarizio's heiress, the young and lovely Isabella; but at the court of Naples, where they were both extolled, she had never yet made her appearance: a few accidental visitors at the remote castle of her father she was indebted to.

'One of the breaks,' said Osmond, 'which I prepared for you.'

'The description given by these accidental visitors of her charms, so impressed itself upon the imagination of Montana, that he would immediately have made overtures for her hand, but for an apprehension of their being exaggerated. The idea, however, of losing so lovely a creature, as he was sensible Isabella must be, if at all according with the portrait drawn of her, rendered him miserable, and at length induced him to determine on sending some one in whom he could confide to the care of Clarizio, for the purpose of ascertaining exactly who she was, and thus having his suspense and indecision respecting her terminated.

The person whom, after some deliberation, he thought proper to employ, was a youth of the name of Carlo Bonifoni, the descendant of a noble but unfortunate house, in the fate of which some particular circumstances,

necessary to narrate, had so strongly interested Montana, who was not altogether destitute of those qualities which constitute the nobility of the heart, that, on its final downfall, he took this its sole surviving branch under his protection, and educated him with a care and tenderness that caused it to be reported, and generally believed, that he meant to make him his heir.

The heart of the youthful Carlo dilated with transport at the confidence reposed in him by his benefactor. He exulted to think he had an opportunity of obliging him, feeling, whenever such a one occurred, the debt of gratitude he owed him less oppressive.

Attended by one chosen domestic, he set out for the castle of Clarizio, where he purposed introducing himself, under the pretext of having lost his way.

He travelled with such expedition, that towards the close of day, just as the yellow radiance that had long trembled over it was fading away, he entered the forest of Clarizio. The tale he had fabricated for the purpose of gaining admission to the stately mansion it embowered, succeeded as he wished. On giving in his name at the portal, he was invited to enter, and conducted through a numerous train of domestics to the banquetting-room, where the Count and Countess sat at supper. Nothing could be more gracious than their reception of him. As soon as the ceremonies of introduction were over, and he had taken a seat beside his noble hostess, he looked for Isabella. Three young ladies occupied places at the table, but all so equally and so exquisitely lovely, that, struck with surprise and admiration, he could scarce forbear exclaiming.... 'Are there then three Isabellas?'

He soon found, however, that not one of these answered to that name, that they were merely visitors at the castle, and that Isabella herself was then confined by a slight indisposition to her apartment. Impatience to behold her made him forsake his couch at an early hour the ensuing morning: he found the Count and Countess in a magnificent saloon, opening to a garden, yet glittering with the dews of early day, and exhibiting at once all the verdure of spring and luxuriance of summer.

But from inanimate objects his attention was speedily diverted by a young female advancing down a vista towards the saloon: on her his eyes instantly became rivetted....for never had so lovely an object before met their gaze.

'Oh! if this be Isabella (he inwardly exclaimed, blest indeed will Montana be, should he gain her hand! Oh! if this be her, I must hence without delay, or endanger my fidelity to him.'

She entered, and was presented to him as the daughter of his host. He perceived the danger of tarrying another hour at Clarizio; yet still he lingered; and by unconsciously exposing himself to temptation, became overpowered by it; the seductive softness of Isabella's manners completed the conquest of her eyes, and he became a traitor to honour, gratitude, and Montana....not scrupling to let the Count and Countess imagine, as a means of inducing them to favour his addresses to their daughter, that it was indeed the intention of the Marchese Montana to make him his heir: neither to write to this unsuspecting friend that she by no means justified the report given of her charms; notwithstanding which however, it was his intention, if his patron objected not to the measure, to endeavour to recommend himself to her favour, his situation in life rendering birth and fortune of more estimation in his eyes than personal accomplishments.

As he expected, Montana readily and joyfully accorded him the permission he had thus artfully solicited to pay his addresses to the Lady Isabella, accompanied with his best wishes for the success of his suit.

These wishes were speedily accomplished. Carlo yet scarcely in the bloom of life, and possessed of all that heaven or earth could bestow to render him amiable....the finest symmetry of form, the most seducing manners, eyes eloquently expressive of the movements of his soul, the rarest and the most dazzling accomplishments....soon succeeded in inspiring Isabella with wishes responsive to his own.

Her happiness was too precious to her parents to permit them to control her inclination in the present in-

stance, although an immediate, instead of expected, acquisition of fortune, would have been a very agreeable circumstance to them ; their own, through various circumstances, being so much impaired, that at this period, they found it nearly inadequate to the maintenance of that splendor hereditary pride made them anxious to keep up.

The nuptials of their daughter agreed on, and to which Carlo contrived a plausible pretext both to him and them for not inviting Montana, the most magnificent fetes took place at the castle in honour of them. Amongst other entertainments given on this occasion at Clarizio, was a grand tournament in the Spanish style, arranged by Carlo, and contrived by him, in order to obtain a better opportunity of displaying his fine figure and accomplishments to his mistress than he had yet obtained.

This entertainment was held in the great lawn before the castle, and at either side of which elevated balconies were erected for the ladies.

A troop of Christian knights first entered the field, headed by Carlo, and habited alike in coats of purple and yellow silk, with shining helmets, adorned with waving plumes of white feathers, gold-cased scymeters suspended from their left sides by a chain of the same metal, and on their left arms polished steel targets....the device, two hands united, in gold inlaid....

THE MOTTO.

'Tis through our valour won.

Next followed a troop of Moorish knights, habited in coats of scarlet, richly embroidered with white, and flowers of gold, gorgeous scymeters falling from their sides, and their shields of ozier....the device, globe supported by Atlas.

THE MOTTO.

Until fatigued I grow.

To these succeeded the Saracen chiefs, mount their fiery steeds, their cloaks and jackets richly of green and orange hue, their scymeters embossed with gold, and suspended by chains of precious stone targets studded with emeralds....the device, a lion with a large club.

THE MOTTO.

Surrounded by the green.

Carlo triumphed over every competitor. The ported Isabella flung perfumes on him, as, with obeisance, he passed the balcony where she was the queen of the day ; and the air was rent with exclamations, on his again approaching it, to receive from her fair hand the prize allotted to the victor.

To this day of pleasure succeeded a night of pain rather torture, to Carlo. His native honour and greatness, revived by the chivalrous exercise in which he had been engaged, he reviewed with horror and detestation the treachery of his conduct towards Montana ; the paroxysm of repentance and remorse it excited, he solved on surrendering Isabella.

‘ Oh, Montana,’ he wildly exclaimed, as he formed this soul-harrowing resolution, ‘ to what a cruel sacrifice have you reduced me ! Could you not, should you not have foreseen, that if the beauty of Isabella adorned with the portrait drawn of it, the ardent eye of a lover could scarcely gaze on her with impunity ? Too considerate friend, you have undone me, since, if I give up, I die....if I persevere in making her mine, I lose the quish that without which life will be hateful. I must end, oh Heaven ! in mercy end this dreadful struggle between passion and virtue, by taking me to myself.’

To regain the height, however, from which impetuosity had hurried him, was beyond the resolution of Carlo to attempt ; and in order to try and reconcile himself to his conduct, he had recourse to sophistry, flattering, or rather trying to persuade, himself (for neither reason nor conscience are as easily silenced as but too frequently wish them to be) that he should

still more basely, more unjustifiably now, if, after winning the heart of Isabella, he gave her up, than he had previously done towards his friend. In a word, love triumphed over every other consideration; and he became the husband of Isabella, flattering himself that in her arms he should quickly lose all tormenting remembrances. But he soon found that he had indeed but flattered himself, when he indulged such a hope....found that while memory held its place, he must be miserable....soon found, that guilt never yet laid a foundation for happiness.

The anguish inflicted by his continual self-reproaches was aggravated by the constant dread he was in of his treachery being discovered by Montana, and of consequence his being held up to public scorn; for well he knew Montana was not a man to be offended with impunity....so well indeed, that but for the restraints he fancied a high sense of honour imposed upon him, he would not, from his knowledge of his warm and vindictive temper, have been without an apprehension of becoming his victim in every sense of the word, should his perfidy be ever betrayed to him.*



CHAP. IX.

* When Heaven and Earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being, and serene his soul,
Can he forbear to join the general smile
Of Nature?....Can fierce passions vex his breast,
While every gale is peace, and every grove
Is melody?....Hence, from the bounteous walks
Of flowering Spring, ye sordid Sons of Earth,
Hard and unfeeling of another's woe,
Or only lavish to yourselves; away!

THOMSON.

HERE Osmond was interrupted by a low but most malignant voice, exclaiming....'Stuff....nonsense....folly!....and looking up he beheld Mr. Raymond at the elbow of his lady, where, from this exclamation, he supposed he had been stationed some time.

‘After wasting, in the ridiculous manner you have done,’ he proceeded, addressing himself to his wife and daughter, ‘the moments you should have devoted to repose, I presume, ladies, you will not attempt to annoy me again with complaints of being fatigued.’

Confused and disconcerted beyond expression, Osmond started up, and returning the manuscript, on which such polite animadversions had been made, to his pocket, precipitately withdrew to a distance, lest otherwise, if he longer listened to Mr. Raymond, he should be unable to repress, in the manner he wished, out of respect to the feelings of his lady and daughter, the indignation his conduct inspired him with.

‘But, for his brutality to them, the hour of remorse will yet, I make no doubt,’ he said to himself, ‘arrive.... The blessings heaven bestows upon us are seldom if ever underrated, or disregarded with impunity.’

As soon as his emotion had a little subsided, he repaired to Felisco, the heat being by this time a good deal abated, to enquire whether he was not thinking of getting the horses ready.

‘No,’ Felisco replied, ‘not for another hour, at least;’ as it was better to defer the renewal of their journey, than, when once recommenced, loiter on the road.

Again, therefore, Osmond wandered away to indulge his own thoughts. The approaching separation between him and his fair companions was what now principally occupied them; for once across the Appennines, which, now that they were so near Venosa, they should shortly be, and he doubted not losing their society....(It should here be mentioned, that Mrs. Raymond had given him to understand they were journeying to Naples, with an intention of staying there some time....) the supercilious conduct of their ungrateful relative precluding a hope of a further intimacy being allowed between them; with such sentiments as he entertained for Miss Raymond, he could not but acknowledge it was better it should be prohibited, since so hopeless of ever being able to aspire to her hand. Still, however, the idea of this could not, in any degree, reconcile him to the thoughts of no more seeing...of no more conversing with her; for, alas!

what the reason approves, the heart does not always subscribe to.

Convinced that the longer he suffered his thoughts to dwell on her, the more unhappy he should be, he endeavoured to detach his ideas, by reviewing her father's conduct towards him ; the rudeness, the dislike which it manifested....a dislike for which he was wholly at a loss to account, surprised, as much as it disgusted him ; as did also the profound attention with which he frequently saw him observing him. From his manner (but that he knew they had never met before) he would have been tempted to imagine that either he had been so unfortunate as to inspire him with injurious suspicions, or else to have mortally offended him.

That the mother and daughter would feel some little regret at the breaking off of all further correspondence, he could not help thinking, and the thought at once pleased and pained him, since, while he wished to live in their remembrance, he shrunk from the idea of being the source of any uneasiness to them.

His reverie was at length interrupted by Mactalla calling to inform him the horses were ready. He hastened to the spot to which he had been summoned, and to his surprise found Mr. Raymond mounting his horse, totally regardless of his daughter. His lady, in no one instance, had he treated as an object of any importance to him. It may readily be supposed, Osmond did not neglect so favourable an opportunity of paying her attention. He assisted her on horseback ; but though an equally favourable one occurred for conversation with her and her mother, Mr. Raymond being, perhaps by his contrivance, separated from them by the intervention of Mactalla and the French boy, they rode on for a considerable time in silence. At length Mrs. Raymond made an overture to break it, but from the languid tone in which she spoke, it was evident to him originated more in a fear of giving him offence, should she act otherwise, than from real inclination.

That this languor was principally owing to the effect her husband's neglectful, or rather tyrannical conduct had on her spirits, Osmond could not doubt, and this idea re-

vived his indignation against him....an indignation not lessened by the corresponding melancholy that appeared in the manner of Miss Raymond. He smothered it however, and exerted himself to the utmost to divert them from unpleasant reflections.

The beauty of the prospects that now came immediately under their observation, the characteristic qualities of the Italians, and the perfection they had attained in the respective arts and sciences, were the subjects they now chiefly conversed on.

‘But if Italy was infinitely less delightful than it is with regard to scenery and climate, still,’ continued Osmond, following up the observations he had made on both, ‘the reflection of its having formerly been the seat of the triumphant rulers and conquerors of the world, to whom nations bowed, and ages yet to come will celebrate could not fail of rendering it interesting.’

‘Assuredly,’ said Mrs. Raymond; ‘nor, in a contemplative mind, would the sensations it is calculated to excite be lessened, perhaps, by the striking contrast there is between its present and former inhabitants.’

‘In some instances, perhaps, they may have degenerated,’ returned Osmond; ‘but if inferior to them in the rougher arts, they certainly equal them in the softer.’

‘As for instance,’ cried Miss Raymond, ‘with regard to painting and statuary, they stand unrivalled; and in music, their eminence in that delightful science has justly occasioned their country to be styled the land of harmony.’

‘They are, indeed, justly celebrated for all,’ returned Osmond. ‘In their paintings, Nature herself seems to mingle the colours; and as to their statues, they appear only wanting a second Prometheus to make them start into animation.’

‘And what does Mr. Munro think of Nature’s own productions here?’ asked Mrs. Raymond. ‘In short, what does he think of the beauty of the Italian ladies, a natural question you must allow for a female?’

Osmond bowed and smiled....‘I have certainly,’ he replied, ‘thought nature prodigal to such of the Italian ladies as I have yet seen. Nevertheless, I am told the

beauty is not more prevalent here than in other countries ; that here will often be sought in vain that charming combination of colours, and delicacy of form, which the eye of man demands, when it contemplates the softer sex ; not mine, however, always, I candidly confess, since I think beauty depends infinitely more upon expression, than this combination of colours ; at least, the finest complexion, the most delicate features, would fail of interesting me, if unindicative of mind. When true to its movements, then, indeed, nature has completed her work, and the heart of man,' (he glanced perhaps involuntarily at Miss Raymond as he spoke) ' must pay homage to it.'

' And yet it has been observed,' said Mrs. Raymond, that it is difficult for a woman of great sensibility, to be perfectly handsome, since sensibility, by its delicate motions, necessarily deranges the proportions of the face.'

' True ; but how captivating is the expression which substitutes for insipid regularity !'

' I agree with you in thinking so,' said Mrs. Raymond ; ' the finest face in the world would fail of interesting me, if devoid of animation.'

' I love those fugitive graces,' as an elegant writer styles them, ' which of one amiable person form twenty.'

' Of the Italian ladies it has been remarked,' resumed Raymond, ' justly, I make no doubt, that from the natural sweetness of their manners, and mellifluous tone of voice, they could fail of pleasing, even though not possessed of any particular personal charms.'

In this way they continued to converse for some time, till, at length, their approach to a steep and rugged declivity recalled them to a sense of danger.

On descending this, they found themselves, after proceeding some way, through flowering thickets and embowering shades, on the edge of a narrow river, margined on one side with low rocks, bespread with moss and brambles ; and on the other by lofty hills, wholly covered with wood. The solemn grandeur of this sylvan scene was heightened at the hour by the rich glow the setting sun shed over it, and the gorgeousness of the evening clouds that floated through the blue expanse, shifting into shapes

of visionary beauty, in which it required no great stretch of imagination to pourtray the antique tower with shady domes, and pinnacles adorned, or hills of wide extent, that rose or sunk as sportful fancy listed.

The travellers, pursuing the course of the river, proceeded in a road, bounded at one side by the water, and the other by tremendous precipices, forming, from their ruggedness, a striking contrast to the woody hills on the opposite shore. The savage aspect of these, however, was for some time prevented having the effect it was so well calculated to produce, namely, that of inspiring melancholy and terror, by the pastoral music heard in every direction, of shepherds collecting and returning homeward with their flocks, to fold them for the night. But as these cheerful, and from the indications they gave of not being out of an inhabited tract, welcome sounds, died away, and the soft shadows of evening began to give place to the deeper shades of night, apprehension gradually resumed its empire over the minds of the party, and Mr. Raymond bitterly inveighed against Felisco, for delaying the renewal of their journey so long. Felisco, however, contented that they should reach Venosa in very good time, and that had they recommenced their journey sooner, they would have found the horses unable to carry them.

Osmond, for some time, succeeded tolerably well in keeping up the spirits of his fair companions; but, at length, a rising wind, and darkening clouds, giving intimation of an approaching storm, they became completely alarmed.

Osmond, on their account, now anxiously demanded of Felisco, whether, should a tempest overtake them, they could obtain any shelter from it?.... To which Felisco replied.... 'Very indifferent, if any.' Adding, however, by way of consolation, that he thought it would blow over.

In this opinion Osmond was for some time inclined to concur, from the continual dispersion of the dark clouds which had gathered in the horizon, and the sinking of the wind; but, at length, all hope of its passing away in the manner he wished, was annihilated by a sud-

en flash of lightning, and a tremendous burst of thunder, stunning to the sense, as in horrid uproar it was repeated from rock to rock, and down the dells of the mountains, the clouds all the while illuminated, and emitting fire. This awful spectacle was quickly succeeded by a torrent of rain, which presently forming cascades, in the hollows of the cliffs, the road became early inundated by them in their progress to the river, which now, with foaming fury, lashing its banks, completed the horrors of the scene.

The dreadful situation of the ladies, sinking beneath terror, and the violence of the storm, made Osmond again call out to Felisco, to entreat him to find some shelter for them.

‘Do, my good fellow,’ cried Mr. Raymond, in a tone very different to that in which he had heretofore addressed him; ‘do, for I protest,’ (heightening the dislike Osmond had conceived to him, by convincing him his concern was all of a selfish nature) ‘I fear, if much longer exposed to the storm, I shall never get over the effects of it.’

‘Aye, aye,’ exclaimed Felisco, in a reproachful tone, ‘tis now that a service is wanted, my good fellow, and my honest fellow, but to-morrow I warrant it will be, you stupid fellow, and you impertinent fellow.’

‘By blessed St. Benedict, Felisco,’ cried Mactalla, impatiently, ‘but this is no time to be ripping up old sores; the question now is, do you know of any place into which we can thrust our heads?’

‘Why, if lonesome shelter be not objected to, I can lead you through a cleft in the mountains,’ answered Felisco, ‘to a ruined monastery, at no great distance.’

‘Any thing, any thing,’ eagerly replied Osmond; ‘lead on, my friend, for the storm, if possible, is becoming still more violent.’

‘What strange company,’ said Mactalla, falling to the rear, and riding close to his master, as they followed Felisco to the ruin, ‘do misfortunes sometimes introduce a man to! why, Signor, do you know, the building we are going to is full of dead friars and nuns?’

‘Well,’ observed Osmond, ‘we cannot be in better... at least quieter company.’

‘Some how such company is not, nor never was, by any means, to my mind ; I don’t at all relish taking refuge amidst the dead.’

‘Would that we had nothing to fear in this world,’ said Osmond, ‘but from the dead.’

‘You are of opinion, then, Signor, that the dead cannot molest us.’

‘Assuredly I am of opinion that the man whose conscience is void of offence towards God and man, has nothing to dread from the inhabitants of the other world.’

‘O, then, if that be the case, I’ll pluck up my courage ; for, thanks to the Powers, my conscience, I believe, is as fair and as clear as most of my neighbours ; and moreover, before I left Acerenza, I settled all accounts with it ; not, indeed, I must do myself the justice to say, that it was over-burthened at the time, but when a man has an opportunity, he may as well rub out scores of that kind as not.’

A short time brought them to the ruin, which the vivid lightning, that every minute played around them, still followed by rumbling peals of thunder, permitted them to see was an immense, but completely dilapidated fabric.

On alighting, the ladies, Mr. Raymond, and Osmond, took refuge under a porch, until Mactalla and Felisco had collected some sticks, when the latter striking a light, the materials for which he had fortunately furnished himself with at the castle, they advanced into the interior of the building, preceded by their attendants, with each a flaming brand. After making their way with difficulty over broken flags, and heaps of rubbish, they found themselves in the body of the chapel, amidst long-drawn aisles, and far-extended arcades, overrun with weeds, and where their situation was scarcely less comfortless than it had been without, the roof being in so decayed a state as to admit the rain in many places.

Notwithstanding this, however, the fearful gloom of the place rendered the ladies unwilling to advance in

st of another, better calculated to afford them shelter. At length the angry remonstrances of Mr. Raymond, backed by the gentler representations of Osmond, the fatal consequences that could scarcely fail of resulting from their continuing in one so damp and cheerless, induced them to go in. Accordingly, penetrating through the obscurity of the chapel, they beheld an elevation of several steps, which ascending, they found themselves in a spacious hall, ending in a narrow passage, terminated by a small apartment, still in good preservation, and affording besides a place capable of having a fire.

Mactalla and the French boy were immediately dispatched for fuel, and Felisco for some clothes, belonging to the party, which he had contrived to get into his hands at the castle, and put up for them. As soon as these were brought, and the fire kindled, Osmond withdrew, to give the ladies an opportunity of changing theirs; and leaving Mactalla, and the boy, as guards at the door, repaired with Felisco to see after the horses, and look out for some shelter for them.

After a tiresome search, they at last found a place for them at the rear of the building. On returning to it, Osmond examined the entrance, and finding a door still attached to it, with an inside fastening, availed himself of it, to close it up, and thus prevent any disagreeable surprise.

He had the satisfaction of finding his companions as comfortable as existing circumstances would permit, the fire by this time emitting a blaze that thoroughly lighted the room, and some old benches having been discovered in a corner, on one of which Mactalla had spread the remainder of the provisions.

For the anxiety he had manifested about her and her daughter, Mrs. Raymond now evinced her gratitude, by paying him every attention in her power. Nor was she regardless of his humble friends, on their retiring, out of modesty and respect, to the farther end of the room; she assisted on their approaching the fire, and participating in the comforts they had been the means of procuring.

Very different to hers was the conduct of Mr. Ray-

mond ; for the exertions which had been made in the present instance to serve him, he appeared not more grateful than he had done before.

The instant Osmond entered the apartment, he started from the fire at which he had been standing, and having previously taken refreshment, ordered Felisco to spread out upon the floor the remainder of the things belonging to him and the ladies, upon which, wrapped up in a *roquelaure* he found amongst them, he lay down to repose, having first, however, taken care to satisfy himself that one or other of the party would keep watch.

Osmond advised the ladies to follow his example, their minds, however, were too perturbed to permit them, the horrors of this night too strongly resembling that of the night in which they had fallen into the hands of the banditti, not to make them tremble with apprehension of its terminating in a similar manner. Osmond exerted himself, and was seconded by Felisco, to banish this apprehension, representing the little probability there was of banditti lurking about so unfrequented a quarter as the present, and the still less there was of their being pursued by those they had escaped from, in a direction where they must be aware there was but little likelihood of being able to trace them.

‘ Well, I trust, at last,’ said Mrs. Raymond, ‘ that what you say may be the case, for I acknowledge I am not ambitious of figuring away again as a heroine of romance.’

‘ I now find, indeed,’ added her fair daughter, ‘ that it is much pleasanter to read of, than to meet with adventures.’

‘ Why, certainly,’ said Osmond, ‘ I confess there was a little too much of the terrific in yours to permit them to be agreeable.’

‘ Yet now that they are, I trust, over,’ rejoined Mrs. Raymond, in something like a tone of gaiety, ‘ I don’t know that I much regret them, they have furnished me with so complete a tale of wonder for my friends. My only objection to relating it will arise from my fear of its being considered too much in the Munchausen style to gain implicit credit.’

‘ But as a consolation, reflect my dear Madam, that the

is doubted, the greater is the estimation in which imagination must be held.'

'e,' she returned, 'I did not think of that before. I shall certainly content myself with the idea of gainers, if I don't believe.''

'the former, Madam,' with a bow and a smile, said 'I am certain you can never find it difficult n.'

'cept,' cried she, returning his smile, 'where there is a deficiency of taste.'

'exactly so,' he replied.

'a little farther conversation of a desultory nature, Raymond finding her *bona sposa* had fallen asleep, retired to Osmond, since they could not follow his example and were, as he conceived, in no danger of being sensibly surprised, that he should finish the manner curiosity being strongly excited, she said, to the repentance of Carlo ended.

Osmond, by a bow, signified his readiness to obey her; and having seen that there was sufficient fuel at hand to keep up the fire some time longer, drew forth the grapt, and, with the mother and daughter seated beside him, and Mactalla and Felisco, by the express order of the former, at no great distance, and continuing to the fire, proceeded as follows....

very as Isabella was, and greatly as his soul adored her, there were moments when, writhing under the weight of his knowledge of her had given birth to, in which Carlo wished he had never seen her....a wish, however, which always ended in wonder and repentance, having formed such a one.

As Montana lived, Isabella, he resolved, should quit the mansion in which she had been brought up, a resolution which was productive of additional torture to him, so importunate was she to be taken to the grave after the decease of her parents....an event that occurred soon after her nuptials.

Osmond was compelled to have recourse to various falsehoods to excuse his not attending to these importuni-

ties, but in vain he endeavoured to reconcile his lady to continue in her present residence : yet not so much from weariness of its solitude, or the affecting remembrances it was calculated to keep alive, did Isabella desire to quit Clarizio, as from motives of vanity. She knew she was fair...she loved admiration ; and at Naples she was convinced her thirst for this would be amply gratified. To the idolizing Carlo, however, who, on every occasion, regarded her with a lover's eye, these, her real motives for desiring to visit that celebrated scene of luxury and pleasure, remained unknown ; he believed her to be as perfect in mind as she was in form.'

' Here follows,' said Osmond, after a pause of some minutes, during which his eye wandered over the manuscript, ' a chasm of considerable length ; but which I imagine, does not materially interrupt the story, as, from a few words scattered throughout, I fancy it was merely filled up with an account of the circumstance that betrayed to the knowledge of Montana the treachery of his friend.'

' Ah ! I apprehended his obtaining that knowledge,' cried Miss Raymond.... ' poor Carlo, I tremble for him.'

' But I am sure, my dear girl, you must acknowledge he merits punishment,' observed her mother ; ' deceit and ingratitude are crimes of the blackest dye.'

' I attempt not to excuse him,' returned Miss Raymond, with an air of confusion ; but we often pity where we cannot forgive.'

' True,' returned her mother.... ' but we delay Mr. Munro.'

Osmond bowed, and went on....

' But I will be convinced....thoroughly convinced,' cried Montana, as he traversed, with disordered steps, the solitary chamber, to which he had retreated, on hearing of the perfidy of his young and hitherto highly-esteemed friend, ' that Carlo has deceived me, ere I accuse him of baseness, so revolting to my nature is the idea of the apology I should think it incumbent to make, did I revile him without cause. I will visit him at Clarizio....On the

evidence of my own senses will I alone acquit or condemn him, should he prove the traitor he has been represented. Why then,'.....he paused....his dark eyes shone gloomily in their orbits, and fell upon a dagger.... 'Why then,' viewing with a ghastly smile, the shining instrument of destruction, 'that shall avenge me !'

He tried to hope he should find Carlo innocent ; but when he reflected on the tenor of his conduct since his marriage, the strange and confused excuses he had made, for not accepting any one of the many pressing invitations he had given him and his Lady to Naples, and the equally ridiculous ones he had offered, for not sending him one in return to Clarizio, he feared.... He greatly feared, he should find himself disappointed in his hope.

With the utmost secrecy, that, if injured, his intended vengeance might not be frustrated, he set out for his friend's mansion.

The crush of worlds could not have astonished Carlo more than the information of his being at his gate. His feelings, on the occasion, were aggravated by the constraint he was forced to impose upon them.

With counterfeited, he flattered himself, well counterfeited joy, he hastened to give him welcome, but he was mistaken. Ill at dissembling, and taken beside by surprise, every look, every gesture betrayed the inward workings of his soul, and left the keen penetrating Montagna, almost the instant he cast his eyes upon him, without a doubt of his being the villain he had been represented.

It was night when he reached the Castle of Clarizio, and he retired to his magnificent apartment without seeing Isabella ; for at the first intimation of his approach her husband had conjured her to retire to her's nor leave till she had seen him, promising the moment they again met, to assign his motives for this seemingly strange injunction.

The instant he was at liberty, he flew to her, and at her feet unburthened his heart of the anguish that oppressed it ; confessed the perfidy her charms had caused

him to be guilty of, and, in the name of love, implor her to keep herself out of the view of Montana.

Isabella listened to him with astonishment, and mixture of pleasure and pain. Her vanity was gratified by the convincing proof his conduct had given, of the power of her charms ; yet, at the same time, mortified to think she had been prevented achieving so noble conquest as Montana would have been, his fortune and family being the first in Naples ; and with him therefore she reflected, she should have enjoyed all those pleasures she had so strong a propensity for, and for the privation of which she no longer considered the love and attention of Carlo a sufficient recompence.

Carlo saw she was displeased, but owing to an inadvertent expression which escaped her, imputed her being so solely to the false expectations with which he had inspired her, relative to Montana, of whose intention to marry he could no longer keep her in ignorance.

The positive promise he required, to seclude herself while Montana was their guest, he could not obtain. Nevertheless, from the high opinion he entertained of her prudence, and the sincere affection he imagined she felt for him, he had no apprehension of her acting contrary to his wishes ; and under the pleasing hope of the storm he dreaded being averted by her compliance, he met Montana the ensuing morning, with something like his wonted tranquillity. Short-lived was this tranquillity. At the very moment he was apologizing for the non-appearance of Isabella, under the plea of indisposition, a soft strain of music caused Montana to start with precipitation from him, and hasten to a distant apartment. With all the wildness and agitation of alarm, Carlo followed, uncertain whether the strain proceeded from Isabella, or one of her attendants. His faculties became suspended by the shock he received, on finding it was from her.

She introduced herself to Montana with all that winning sweetness, that simple elegance for which she was distinguished....a sweetness and elegance, that had if beauty been infinitely less than it was, would still have rendered her a most attractive object.

For a minute Montana was so overpowered....so dazzled by her charms, which never shone more brilliant than on this morning, so great were the pains her vanity had induced her to take to set them off, that he was unable to speak or move. Then recollecting the necessity there was for dissimulation at present in every instance with Carlo, in order to prevent any obstacles being thrown in the way of the revenge he meditated taking, he exerted himself to subdue his emotion; and being an adept in what poor Carlo failed in, namely, the art of disguising what was passing in his mind, soon succeeded in quieting his apprehensions, and lulling him into a dangerous security.

The ungovernable passion he conceived for Isabella, almost the instant he beheld her, made him rejoice at having what he looked upon as a fair pretext for dispatching her husband.

A few days after his arrival at Clarizio, he proposed an amusement of the chase in the adjacent forest.'

'Here follows another break,' said Osmond, 'but of great length, as the purport of the succeeding lines induce.'

Montana contrived to separate his unsuspecting host, whose side he took care to keep, from his attendants, and on gaining a gloomy part of the forest, remote from that in which the chase was pursuing, he complained of fatigues, and proposed alighting. Carlo, of course, immediately dismounted, and hanging the bridles of the horses upon a tree, they penetrated still further into the bosom of the forest, Montana, with well dissembled weakness, leaning on the arm of the credulous Carlo.

On a sudden he paused....'You grow worse, I fear,' said Carlo, looking anxiously in his face, over which the dreadful passions, then labouring in his soul, had cast a ghastly hue, well calculated to inspire a belief of his being indisposed.

'I do,' replied Montana, speaking with affected diffidence. 'Is this part of the forest totally uninhabited?'

'It is,' returned Carlo, in a dejected tone, conceiving

the enquiry owing to his requiring other assistance ; he had the power of rendering him.

‘ Heard you not something this instant ? ’ asked Montana grasping still more firmly the arm on which he led,.... ‘ The bugle horn of the hunters perhaps.’

‘ No,’ answered Carlo ; ‘ it was not the horn of hunters, but the bell of the Chapel of Clarizio you heard striking.’

‘ Thy knell ! ’ vociferated Montana, in a voice of thunder, and at the same instant plunged a dagger in his heart.

‘ Die, traitor ! ’ he exclaimed, as Carlo, on the withdrawing of his arm, staggered, and fell back. ‘ Die, to aggravate the pangs of death, know that she for whom thou hast incurred this blow shall be mine....mine, the grave has well hid thee from her view....mine, with the consciousness of my hand having precipitated thee into it. O fool, for a weak, fickle woman, to be such a friend....to provoke such a foe as I am !....To hope, stripping as thou wert, thou couldst outwit me, or, having done so, elude my vengeance ! ’

‘ The blow was merited,’ said Carlo, in accents scarcely intelligible ; but my youth....the powerful temptations should have been considered as extenuations of my crime. My’.....Isabella he would have added, but died with the loved name hovering on his lips.

At the very moment, as was afterwards ascertained, that his repentant spirit forsook its tenement of clay, Isabella, as she sat alone, contriving new decorations for her charms which had occasioned this dreadful catastrophe, was shocked and alarmed by a deep groan, as of some one in mortal agony within her chamber....a circumstance, as she was rather inclined to superstition, which led her to imagine some evil was at hand. Her presentiment, however, of this by no means prepared her for what had happened.

After the preparation of this execrable deed, Montana lost no time in rejoining the attendants ; and having slightly wounded his arm, and completely discomposed his dress in order to give colour to the tale he had fabricated, impose upon them, informed them that he and their Le

en suddenly beset by banditti, from whom he had miraculously effected his escape, but without being able to afford any assistance to his friend.

He soon succeeded in finding the body of their murdered and beloved Lord; his black hair drenched in blood, his manly features distorted by death.

Though Montana had been able to impose upon the credulity, he had not been equally successful in imposing upon that of their Lady, owing to her superior edge of his character, and of the reason he had to satisfy with Carlo. But though convinced he was a murderer, she was so equally certain, that to accuse him without being able to bring forward unquestionable proofs of his guilt, would only be to involve her in additional trouble, that she prevailed on herself to sit with regard to her real opinion, solemnly, however, at the same time determining, if such proofs as she ever fell in her way, not to neglect availing herself of them.

Her affection for her Lord, though not so fervent as it might have been, owing to the levity of her disposition, was sincere....too animated, not to make her bitterly regret his death, especially when she reflected that she was an accessory to, or rather the occasion of it, by acting as she had done, in opposition to his wishes....the knowledge of him, whose gentleness, whose tenderness, whose anxious study to promote her happiness had given him claims upon her affection: she could not dwell upon this awful-harrowing idea without experiencing a degree of horror and remorse, that at times almost tempted her violent hands upon herself.

Montana made several attempts to gain admission to the chamber, all of which she repulsed with horror and indignation; he was not, however, discouraged by this conduct; he was persuaded he knew her better than she knew herself, and doubted not, therefore, her yet enabling him to accomplish his prediction to her dying husband.

The day which beheld the remains of the youthful and lovely Carlo consigned to the tomb, a domestic found up a dagger in the forest, which not doubting to be the one wielded against him, he delivered as

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in duty bound, to his Lady, hoping it might be the means of enabling her to trace his murderer.

With shuddering horror, Isabella, as soon as she was left to herself, approached the table, on which, by her command, it had been laid, and minutely examining it, discovering, immediately beneath the handle, a small crest of the Montana family. This confirmation of her horrible suspicions for a few minutes threw her into agony. Then dropping on her knees.... 'May this dagger,' said she, grasping it between her trembling and uplifted hands, 'be sheathed in my heart, as it was in thine, oh Carlo! if I exert not myself to bring to punishment the cruel perpetrator of thy death.'

The room door was burst open as she spoke. She started up to chide the abrupt intruder, and beheld Montana.

'Away, murderer!' she almost unconsciously exclaimed, shrieking, and shrinking back, on beholding him.... 'away! let not my eyes be blasted by the sight of my husband's destroyer!'

Montana, however, was not to be awed from her presence: the storm which assailed him on forcing himself into it, neither surprised nor alarmed him; spite of it he maintained his ground, and with all the bold effrontery of hardened guilt, persisted in denying the crime of which she accused him.

His solemn protestations, however, of innocence shook not her opinion of his guilt; but though he failed of changing that opinion, strange, nay, horrible to relate, he succeeded in appeasing the resentment it inspired. His artful blandishments....his seductive wiles....his insinuating flattery....his specious eloquence, at once dazzling and fascinating, gradually subdued her rage, by leading her to believe it was alone owing to the irresistibility of her charms that he had raised his hand against the life of her husband. In short, gratified vanity disarmed just indignation, and Montana was pardoned, on account of the motives she imputed his guilt to.

I will not, Laura, needlessly lengthen this narrative by commenting on her conduct....a narrative I am at times almost tempted to think it idle for me to continue,

so great is my uncertainty of its ever reaching your hands. My health is declining fast, and if not transmitted to you before my pilgrimage is ended, there is but little probability that it ever will ; for here no kind friend is at hand to catch my last faltering accents, or pay obedience to my dying wishes....but to proceed....

Isabella....the vain and perjured Isabella, became the bride of Montana, ere, as he had predicted, the marble jaws of Carlo's sepulchre were well closed upon him. The passion which had induced him to ask her hand, was, as he had himself foreseen, from his perfect knowledge of the inconstancy of his own disposition, but of short duration. The contempt in which he held her for the levity of her conduct....a contempt which precluded his placing the smallest confidence in her, and made him conceive her unworthy of bearing his name, hastened its extinction ; as did still further, the horror with which at times her base ingratitude to the memory of Carlo caused him to view her, who, though he had offended him, had not offended, but adored her.

Weariness was shortly succeeded by a resolution to rid himself of her, and thus make room for some other female, more deserving of his esteem, and the honour of perpetuating his name. Yet fickle as he was, and by this time hardened in iniquity, this was a resolution he probably never would have formed, but for the dreadful opinion he had conceived of Isabella, in consequence of her acceptance of the hand which she was conscious had shed the blood of her husband, and that too without any passion to plead in extenuation of the crimes he was guilty of ; for well Montana knew he was no longer an object calculated to inspire love, faded and injured as his appearance was by the licentious life he had long led.

After their nuptials, he had taken her to Naples ; they now returned to Clarizio, its solitude favouring the designs he meditated against her life. Though unsuspecting of these designs, Isabella felt a terror she could not account for, at the thoughts of remaining there any time with him....a terror not diminished by the mournful air of desolation, the neglect it had experienced from the period of their departure had occasioned it to wear.

The affecting remembrances her return awakened, were all that at this period was wanting to complete the excruciating anguish repentance and regret gave birth to; both of which Montana, in all their bitterness, had made her experience, ere she had been long his wife.

Scarcely had she alighted from the carriage, which reconveyed her to the beloved scenes of her early youth.... the scenes of all her happiness with Carlo, ere a thousand tender recollections rushing on her soul, she fled, with an irrepressible cry of despair, to the chapel where his remains reposed.

Already the gloom of closing day pervaded it, involving the remote parts in a fearful obscurity, and heightening the melancholy appearance of such objects as were distinguishable.

Isabella paused beneath the porch, awed by the dim light, and a consciousness of unworthiness, from entering the holy place. Her eye, however, eagerly darted forward to the tomb of her husband. She shrieked; for at the instant a beautiful effigy of herself, bending in a mourning attitude over the recumbent figure, tottered, and fell down.

'Oh, Carlo....beloved Carlo!' exclaimed the now nearly frantic Isabella, rushing forward, and prostrating herself before his tomb, amidst the fragments of her broken effigy, 'is this....is this to indicate that thy pure spirit will hold no converse with mine in the other world?... Oh, if so, revoke the cruel determination; let the voice of anguish....the sincerity of my repentance, move thee to take compassion on me. Intercede for me with him, ye whose happy spirits mingle with his in the regions of the blest....intercede for me with him,' turning, by degrees, on her knees towards the monument of her parents, where stood their effigies.

Again she shrieked and shrunk back; for a rising wind rushing furiously through the chapel, at the moment, shook the time-struck edifice, and for a moment made her imagine the figures about falling to crush her beneath them for her guilt.

'Oh, woe is me!' she cried, 'abandoned of all,' and smiting her fair bosom, she again prostrated herself on

the ground....Her heart ascended in fervent prayer to him whose ear is ever open to the cry of wretchedness and penitence. The warmth of her devotion by degrees little calmed the perturbation of her spirit; she reflected on the remission of sins, promised to the penitent, and gleam of comfort stole athwart her mind.

She was suddenly interrupted by a noise; she looked up, and beheld at some distance a faint light, resembling that which shaded tapers give. By degrees it cleared, and discovered to her view the figure of a man, leaning against an open door at the side of the chapel.

Concluding him an attendant sent by Montana, for her, and who, from unwillingness to disturb her devotions, had left his taper outside the chapel, and remained silent, she immediately arose; but lest she should be mistaken, she enquired whether it was as she supposed?

He replied by bending his head, and extending his arm towards the door.

Isabella nodded....‘I understand you,’ she cried; ‘lead on, I follow to my Lord.’

He obeyed by gliding out before her, and led through several windings and turnings, to a remote apartment, in which Montana sat, and at the door of which he vanished, she knew not how, from her sight.

On entering, she was alarmed, by Montana fiercely demanding, as he started from a couch on which he was reclining, what had brought her there?

His commands, she replied, in an humble and affrighted tone, his brutality having intimidated her....a brutality occasioned by his rage at having been broken in upon, at the very moment he was deliberating on the safest method to himself of putting her to death.

‘’Tis false,’ he returned, his eyes gleaming, his lips quivering; ‘I sent no message.’

‘I understood from one of your attendants you had done so,’ she returned, in still more submissive accents than she had before spoken in.

‘Let me know which of them,’ with encreasing fury, he cried, ‘had the audacity to utter so impertinent a falsehood?’

‘None of them,’ she replied; ‘it was only from the gestures of the man I concluded you had sent for me.’

‘Then now that you know I did not, away!’ he cried, ‘and let not your vanity again deceive you into a belief that I desire your company; I have already had too much of it...more than I ever will again,’ in an undertone, he added, and with a look of dreadful meaning.

The wretched Isabella withdrew from his presence in tears, but tears more of sorrow than indignation. With trembling steps she proceeded towards the apartment she was wont to occupy; but ere she reached it, the memorials she every where beheld of departed happiness worked upon her feelings, that in a paroxysm of anguish she cast herself on the ground.

As she wept she fancied she heard herself called; she raised her head, and beheld, at a distance, the person who had disturbed her in the chapel.

It instantly struck her that Montana, repenting him of the savageness of his recent conduct, had sent to request her to return...a request which nothing but the awe she stood in of him, his society, by this time, being quite as hateful to her as hers was to him, could have induced her to think of obeying.

In much confusion at being thus surprised, she started up, and finding the supposed messenger did not speak, desired to know whether he had been sent for her?

A bow was again the only way in which he replied to her.

‘Nay, my friend,’ said she, in a mild accent, ‘you must speak, lest otherwise I again mistake your meaning...say, are you sent for me?’

After the pause of a minute, a low but most emphatic voice replied...‘I am.’

Isabella directly returned, though with the greatest reluctance, to Montana; but what was her amazement, when on again appearing before him, she heard herself reviled with still greater fury than she had before been for intruding on him!

‘Strange,’ said Isabella, roused to something like indignation, by his contemptuous treatment, ‘that you

should call that intrusion which you have yourself desired; I made your messenger assure me this time I was sent for, ere I came.'

'Who is this impertinent...this lying messenger of whom you speak?' demanded Montana, with increasing fury.

'One of your own hirelings, I suppose,' returned Isabella; 'and what is more,' added she, with kindling eyes, 'one who, like his master, has, I conclude, committed some deed that makes him fear to shew his face, so he took care not to let me catch a glimpse of it.'

'Hah, insolence, and to me!' exclaimed Montana.

Isabella in terror attempted to retreat; but suddenly grasping her arm, he flung her to another part of the room, and immediately locked the door.

'Nay, you shall now stay,' cried he, returning to her. Then, with a malicious grin, (when a man has any mischief in his head, how readily does the devil furnish him with an opportunity of committing it!) twisting, as he spoke, one hand in her long floating tresses, and searching in his bosom with the other.

Isabella shrieked and struggled, for the hilt of a dagger gleamed upon her sight.

'Monster!' she exclaimed, 'do you mean to murder me?'

'Do you not wish to be re-united to Carlo?' asked Montana, with a ghastly countenance, and chattering teeth.

'I do,' replied Isabella, panting with terror, 'but.....'

'And so you shall!' vociferated Montana, drawing the dagger still further from his bosom.

Isabella again shrieked and struggled, but in vain, to disengage herself from his grasp.

'Your shrieks.... your struggles are useless,' said Montana; 'we are remote from the other inhabitants of the castle; and even if we were not, who is there would dare to have the temerity to interfere between us? My soul has long been weary of you; and what I dislike I never endure longer than necessity compels me.'

'Monster,' cried Isabella, 'have you no fears for your own life, if you deprive me of mine?'

'None,' replied he, with the exulting smile of a man. 'The manner in which I shall account for your death will prevent any suspicion of my being the cause of it. Carlo left a widow to prosecute me for his murder, yet I suffered no punishment for it. Isabella, like him, leaves no tender relative behind her to enquire into her fate; what, therefore, should I fear on her account?'

As he spoke he drew the dagger from beneath his garment: for a minute he held it suspended over the head of his victim, then struck it to her breast...she fell, he instantly hurried to the door, to make good his retreat from the blood-stained apartment. As he was tending his hand to open it, a strange mysterious-looking figure glided between him and it.

He started back, at once alarmed and dismayed, there was nothing in the chamber capable of affording concealment to any one; neither any door to it but one he had thus been prevented reaching.

His panic, however, was but momentary; the reflection of his safety being at stake made him speedily recover himself, and rush forward for the purpose of seizing the intruder, and one way or other silencing him. But as he attempted to seize him, he eluded his grasp, yet to his increasing amazement, without appearing to move.'

'Stop, Signor, stop,' here interrupted Mactalla, in a hurried accent, and with his eyes almost starting from his head; 'I thought I heard a noise!'

Osmond instantly started from his seat, and hastened to the entrance of the chamber, listened a considerable time, but without hearing ought but the pealing thunder and the whistling of the wind through the crevices, the long-drawn passages of the building....

'A music of the night, that makes the teeth chatter, and the nails blue.'

'Your ear deceived you,' he at length said, addressing Mactalla, as he resumed his seat, and, at the request of his fair companions, the manuscript.

'A sensation more powerful than terror now took possession of Montana; his feet became rooted to the floor....his eyes rivetted on the mysterious stranger. At length his features, which had hitherto been concealed by the intervention of his hand, became visible to him, and he beheld those of the murdered Carlo!...at the same time his coloured vest gave place to a shroud, which falling from his left breast, disclosed a gaping wound!

The blow inflicted on Isabella was not immediately mortal. The dreadful groan which burst from Montana, at this moment, caused her to unseal her eyes, and she beheld the apparition that had so alarmed him. She instantly made an effort to rise and approach the spectre of her husband, but an unavailing one; the hand of death was on her, and chained her to the floor.

Dreadful shrieks, as of one in mortal agony, now resounded through the castle; the affrighted domestics immediately collected, and guided by these, repaired to the apartment where this horrid catastrophe had been acted.

They found their Lady weltering in her blood on the floor, their Lord transfixed and silent, his faculties apparently benumbed by horror.

Isabella lived sufficiently long to relate all that had recently happened, and the circumstances that led to it, as the last sigh hovered on her lips.

'The ways of Providence are just,' said she; 'let no one arraign them; neither any to suppose they can sin with impunity. I prayed that the dagger which pierced the heart of my husband might be sheathed in mine, if I took not vengeance on his murderer, and my guilt in breaking the vow I made has been punished by the accomplishment of that prayer.

'Montana thought from the precautions he took to avoid detection, his present crime would ever remain unknown, and yet scarce has it been committed, ere it has been discovered.

'Oh my friends, had the adornment of my mind occupied but half the time I devoted to that of my person,

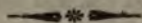
I should not now, in all probability, have been about dropping, like a half-blown flower, untimely blasted, to the grave. Pray for my repentant spirit, and remember that it is not for myself, but Carlo, I desire vengeance to be inflicted on that unhappy man.'

Montana seized and.....'

'The blaze is too feeble to permit me to read the little that remains,' said Osmond. 'Mactalla, replenish the fire.'

Mactalla drew closer to it, but without making any effort indicative of his having heard this order'

Osmond repeated it.



CHAP. X.

'The lowest and most abject thing of fortune
Stands still in hope, live not in fear,
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to better.'

SHAKESPEARE.

MACTALLA replied, the fuel was exhausted.

'Then go out and seek for more,' said his master.

Mactalla trembled.

'Felisco will accompany you,' said Osmond, readily comprehending the cause of his tremor, reluctance to obey him.

Felisco, however, shewed no greater inclination to move than he did.

'What,' demanded Osmond, turning his eyes on him, 'have silly fears also laid hold on you?....Come,' added he, starting from his seat, 'follow me, and I will take care that no ghost or hobgoblin runs away with either of you whilst looking for wood.'

He was prevented however quitting the apartment, by a gentle intimation from Miss Raymond, of her un-

lingness for him to leave them. He directly reseated himself, but almost unconsciously, so violent was the emotion this incident, trifling as it was, excited. What could he not have given at the moment, to have been able to satisfy himself as to the real motive of her resistance to let him leave her!

'O should it proceed from anxiety for me!' he said to himself. He checked the presumptuous idea....he did more, he reproached himself for the exquisite pleasure it had given him, convinced as he was of the dreadful opposition which any sentiments of a tender nature on her part for him would experience from her father, and of consequence the unhappiness which must result to her in entertaining such.

'Oh, never, never may her soft bosom,' he sighed to himself, 'know a pang on my account; dear and transporting as I cannot deny to myself would be the conviction of her feeling an interest for me, was I differently situated, 'tis what under my present circumstances I could deem myself a villain to desire....yes, aware as I am of the insuperable obstacles fortune has placed between us of its being all one....

That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it.'

'I should consider myself lost to generosity, did I wish her to harbour a warmer sentiment for me than friendship.'

By this time nothing remained on the hearth but expiring embers, which, as Mactalla and Felisco ever and anon stirred into a blaze, with the end of their whips, served it to render darkness visible.

At length the faint light that emanated from these died away, leaving the party involved in impenetrable gloom.

'I dare say,' cried Mactalla, not a little pleased at finding his master had ceased importuning him to go out for fuel, and trusting the observation he was about making would prevent his repeating the command, 'that it cannot now be far from day.'

'Tis not possible to see the hour,' said his master,
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'but I am inclined to think 'tis not so late as you
fine.'

Miss Raymond pressed the spring of her repeat
struck half past one.

'What's that?' asked Mactalla, eagerly; 'I
something tick like a clock.'

'Miss Raymond's watch,' replied his master, 'a
half past one.'

'Blessed St. Benedict,' in a dissatisfied accen-
claimed Mactalla, 'what a time we have to remain
dismal place!'

It had been previously settled by Osmond and
dies, that even though the storm should subside
daybreak, they should not till then quit the ruin,
count of the loneliness of the ways about it.

'Be silent,' said his master, in consequence of fu-
he heard at the moment the trampling of horses.

'What,' cried Mactalla, repiningly, 'is the only
fort one can have in such a situation as this, that is
ting, and thereby knowing one is in safe company
taken from us?'

'Yes, especially when you seem inclined to tal-
sense.'

'Well,' resumed Mactalla, after a short but gen-
lence, 'since this is the case, Felisco and I will
and search for fuel, for any thing is better than rem-
quiet in such a situation.'

'Silence, I say again,' cried Osmond, in a mo-
thoritative tone than he had ever before assumed to
him, occasioned by his now plainly distinguish-
only the trampling of horses but the voices of men.

The reason of this injunction was quickly unde-
by the rest of the party, and their terror became un-
able.

Osmond endeavoured to calm the fears of the
although trembling himself with apprehension for
owing to Felisco having in a whisper informed him
the horsemen they heard, and who were eviden-
proaching the ruin, were, he much feared, a party
freebooters, but too probably those they had
from.

In a few minutes the clattering of horses' hoofs upon flagged area before the building, announced them at hand, and shortly after a tremendous crash, that they burst into it.

Osmond instantly dropped the trembling hand which as Raymond no doubt unconsciously had placed in it, and groped his way to the door of the apartment, to see whether there was any fastening to it. None, however, meeting his hand, he placed himself against it, and, in a low voice, called to Felisco and Mactalla to do this and that. They obeyed, and Mr. Raymond, whom the noise occasioned by the bursting open of the outer door had awakened, and to whom Mrs. Raymond, in whispering accents, imparted the apprehensions they were under, also approached to lend his assistance in defending it.

The voices of the intruders were soon heard in horrid roar echoing through the ruin, and their heavy steps a few minutes approaching the apartment where the victims were shut up.

A deep groan, followed by a low exclamation from Mrs. Raymond, now gave Osmond to understand that as Raymond had fainted. The pain this intimation to him was rendered more acute, by his being withheld from rendering her any assistance, owing to his dread of being overheard.

'Prithee,' suddenly exclaimed a voice, at no great distance from the chamber....a voice, which, to his inexorable horror, Osmond immediately recollected to be that of one of the ruffians they had escaped from, 'I say, thou Tivoli, dost thou think this ruin inhabited?'

'Zounds, how should I know any thing of the matter?' grumbled out Tivoli; 'the devil may have taken possession of it for what I know or care. It appears, however, as if it was, by the door being fastened on the inside, and which you may recollect the last time we were here we found open.'

'True,' replied the first speaker, 'that's what made us think so, and ask you the question, which caused you to answer so. D.....n me, Tivoli, I see clearly you'll soon learn complaisance.'

‘but I am inclined to think ’tis not so late as you imagine.’

Miss Raymond pressed the spring of her repeater, and struck half past one.

‘What’s that?’ asked Mactalla, eagerly; ‘I heard something tick like a clock.’

‘Miss Raymond’s watch,’ replied his master, ‘striking half past one.’

‘Blessed St. Benedict,’ in a dissatisfied accent, exclaimed Mactalla, ‘what a time we have to remain in this dismal place!’

It had been previously settled by Osmond and the ladies, that even though the storm should subside before daybreak, they should not till then quit the ruin, on account of the loneliness of the ways about it.

‘Be silent,’ said his master, in consequence of fancying he heard at the moment the trampling of horses.

‘What,’ cried Mactalla, repiningly, ‘is the only comfort one can have in such a situation as this, that of chatting, and thereby knowing one is in safe company, to be taken from us?’

‘Yes, especially when you seem inclined to talk nonsense.’

‘Well,’ resumed Mactalla, after a short but general silence, ‘since this is the case, Felisco and I will go out and search for fuel, for any thing is better than remaining quiet in such a situation.’

‘Silence, I say again,’ cried Osmond, in a more authoritative tone than he had ever before assumed towards him, occasioned by his now plainly distinguishing not only the trampling of horses but the voices of men.

The reason of this injunction was quickly understood by the rest of the party, and their terror became unspeakable.

Osmond endeavoured to calm the fears of the ladies, although trembling himself with apprehension for them, owing to Felisco having in a whisper informed him, that the horsemen they heard, and who were evidently approaching the ruin, were, he much feared, a party of freebooters, but too probably those they had escaped from.

In a few minutes the clattering of horses hoofs upon the flagged area before the building, announced them at hand, and shortly after a tremendous crash, that they had burst into it.

Osmond instantly dropped the trembling hand which Miss Raymond no doubt unconsciously had placed in his, and groped his way to the door of the apartment, to try whether there was any fastening to it. None, however, meeting his hand, he placed himself against it, and, in a low voice, called to Feliseo and Mactalla to do the same. They obeyed, and Mr. Raymond, whom the noise occasioned by the bursting open of the outer door had awakened, and to whom Mrs. Raymond, in whispering accents, imparted the apprehensions they were under, also approached to lend his assistance in defending it.

The voices of the intruders were soon heard in horrid uproar echoing through the ruin, and their heavy steps in a few minutes approaching the apartment where the travellers were shut up.

A deep groan, followed by a low exclamation from Mrs. Raymond, now gave Osmond to understand that Miss Raymond had fainted. The pain this intimation gave him was rendered more acute, by his being withheld from rendering her any assistance, owing to his dread of being overheard.

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'Zounds, how should I know any thing of the matter?' grumbled out Tivoli; 'the devil may have taken possession of it for what I know or care. It appears, however, as if it was, by the door being fastened on the inside, and which you may recollect the last time we were here we found open.'

'True,' replied the first speaker, 'that's what made me think so, and ask you the question, which caused you to growl so. D.....n me, Tivoli, I see clearly you'll never learn complaisance.'

'Whilst I keep company with you, you should have added,' said Tivoli.

'Ha, ha, not badly retorted, you dog,' cried the other; 'I see you can cut with something besides your sword; but lest you should be too vain, let me tell you Tivoli, your wit, like your sword, sometimes wants sharpening; 'tis dull....dull at times as.....'

'Your own,' returned Tivoli, 'granted, but that's only when there is not a tool at hand like you to whet it.'

'Well said, my boy,' shouted the other, 'I see you improve.'

'I am sorry truth won't allow me to return the compliment,' said Tivoli.

'Well, well, no matter,' said the other; 'instead of prating in this idle manner, had we not better search about to try whether the place be inhabited or not; as it be, we may chance to light upon something comfortable, which, after the cursed drenching we have had, we stand much in need of. One would almost be tempted to think the devil owed us a grudge, from the dreadful storms we have lately been overtaken by.'

'Nay, no one that knows you could be tempted to think he owes you a grudge,' cried Tivoli, 'since the master must know he has not any where a more faithful servant.'

'Yourself excepted,' returned the other, 'for I think he has quite as much reason to be pleased with your services as he has with mine: but again I say this is idle talk; let's hunt about to try whether there be any thing living within the building beside ourselves and the rats.'

'Hunt about as much as you please by yourself,' cried Tivoli, in a more surly accent than ever, 'for curse me I bear you company, I am already so fatigued by the rate at which we have rode; beside, upon reflection, I am convinced that the door being closed was owing to the wind slapping it to, and thus causing the bolts to shoot; for, to my knowledge, the country people in the neighbourhood hold the place in too great dread to think of entering it, at least after sunset; and as to travelling you know 'tis entirely out of any beaten tract.'

'Aye, aye,' assented the other, 'I suppose you are right; I know as well as you that the simpletons about

that the devil holds his court in it sometimes, which is sure, considering who its former inhabitants were, I can't be much surprised at their doing.'

'I wish with all my heart he had those in his clutches who have occasioned our being in it now,' said Tivoli. 'Our captain deserves to be poniarded for not having his prisoners to death at once; if he had, what a handsome business would have been saved us!'

'Well, well, take my word for it, he has learned wisdom,' rejoined the other, 'and should be excused now, for not doing what you think he ought, since who could have supposed such a trick would have been played him?'

'Why not such a numskull as you, to be sure,' cried the first; 'but for my part, I never placed any confidence in a fox, Felisco; I saw all along he was d.....bly and deceitful; and as to that velvet-tongued dog he calls his friend, by the lord they are birds of a feather.'

'I say, as to my not suspecting them,' said the other, 'I am which proclaimed him somewhat displeased by your observations, I think it no disparagement whatever to my sagacity not having done so.....Here's Rivorola, I must allow as keen as a hawk, and yet he had no success whatever of them.'

'No, that I hadn't,' exclaimed a new voice; 'but for all their cunning, I think we shall yet be a match for them, now we've got scent of them. What a lucky thing our enquiring of the shepherds as we came along! By the lord, I long more to have that traitor, Felisco, by the neck, than ever I did to rob a Cardinal; for it was he, I am convinced, who contrived their escape, and proposed their cutting across the country, in the manner they have done. Those who pursued them the straight road have already, I suppose, relinquished the chace, and returned home.'

'No doubt,' said Tivoli, 'and mad enough, I warrant, for having had only their pains for their trouble.'

'I mean,' cried Rivorola, 'to entreat the captain, as a particular favour, to let me have the settling of Felisco's fate. As soon as I have tired myself torturing him, I'll flea him alive, as St. Bartholomew was.'

'And I,' said Tivoli, 'in order not to let his friend

Mactalla have reason to complain of being treated in a less handsome manner, shall broil him on a gridiron, like St. Lawrence: as for the rest of the party, we'll poniard them on the spot.'

'All but the young girl,' cried Rivorola, in the most horrid accent; 'for let me tell you, comrades, she's a d....nd deal too pretty to be sent out of the world yet awhile; I mean to ask the captain, who, by the by, owes me some remuneration for past services, to let me have her; and in order to prevent her creating any disturbance amongst us, as I know he'll dread, I'll keep her confined in a remote part of the castle.'

'Do,' said Tivoli; 'and let it be also in a dark room, for curse me, else the sight of your cadaverous phiz will cause her to lay violent hands on herself, rather than remain in your power.'

'Pshaw!' returned Rivorola, as if vexed, 'jesting is not in season always,' walking away as he spoke, and quickly followed by the other two to the great relief of the concealed party.

As soon as they were completely out of hearing, Felisco asked Osmond, in a whisper, whether he had noticed that ruffian, Rivorola, during the time he was at the castle?

On being answered in the negative.... 'He's the most atrocious of the gang,' proceeded Felisco, in the same low key; 'but for nothing so remarkable as for his excessive cruelty, insomuch that he is better known amongst his comrades by the appellation of the bloodhound, than his own name. You probably thought him jesting with regard to what he threatened concerning me, but I make no doubt, if in his power, he'd be as good as his word.'

'And that villain, Tivoli,' cried Mactalla, in a low, but nevertheless indignant tone, 'he would keep his with regard to me, I suppose. By the powers, I wish I had him in a snug corner, out of the hearing of any one, at least any one inclined to serve him, and if I wouldn't make his bones as hot as he wishes to make mine, my name is not Mac.....; by the lord I'd give him a roasting and a broiling, and that too without being at the trouble of laying him on a gridiron for that purpose.'

The fears of the travellers experienced but a short suspension. They were quickly revived by the returning steps of the ruffians, and their stopping within a few yards of the apartment, as if, from their suddenly ceasing to speak, for the purpose of listening.

The heart of Osmond almost ceased to beat at the moment, since, from this circumstance, he entertained scarce a doubt of their having heard some noise within it, which had excited their suspicions, and would of consequence occasion them to attempt entering it. Not on his own account, however, did he experience the terror which now shook his frame; it was chiefly for his companions he trembled with apprehension....for the honest-hearted Felisco, who, in serving him, had, he feared, incurred a death of torture....for the fair, the gentle Cordelia.

After a fearful....an agonizing silence of some minutes, his feelings were again somewhat relieved by hearing Rivorola exclaim....

'Tis d....nd cold;'....and Tivoli, in grumbling accents, enquiring why then he remained where he was?

'Because,' replied Rivorola, 'I fancied I heard a noise hereabouts.'

'D....mn it,' returned Tivoli, 'one would fancy you had a legion of ghosts at your heels, for you are always imagining you hear a noise; to be sure you heard a noise here, but it was only that occasioned by the wind; curse me if it doesn't blow cold enough to turn one to stone.'

'Would that the storm was abated,' said Rivorola, 'for I am impatient to be off, I so much dread the fugitives getting beyond our reach. Once at Venosa, and we may bid them good-by, since, doubtless, there they'll take every precaution to ensure their safety the remainder of the journey.'

'Pshaw! I have told you already, and now I tell you again, there is no danger of their escaping us, close as we have hitherto kept upon their steps, and little likelihood as there is of their being able to brave this storm, since we couldn't.'

'Speak for yourself,' cried Rivorola, indignantly, 'I tell you I could have braved it if my horse would.'

'Ah ! and as to that,' replied Tivoli, in a savage tone, 'I believe I am not the man to flinch from a thing of the kind ; I'd ride through a whirlwind if my beast would but carry me.'

'Let's see whether the sky clears,' said Rivorola, and again they walked away.

They soon, however, returned, accompanied by several of their companions, and again to the inexpressible consternation of the travellers, stopped within a few paces of their retreat, as if meditating an attack upon it in which his apprehensions of their doing, Osmond was nearly confirmed by hearing one of them, in a hurried accent, exclaim....

'Ha, do you think so ? let's try then, that we may be out of doubt on the subject.'

Tivoli's opposition to this proposal quickly, however, relieved him from his dreadful fears.

'I tell you,' said the surly villain, 'twas nothing but the wind you heard ; so don't go to risk your neck by poking your nose into the holes and corners of this dismal rumbling old edifice, since we have nothing at hand present to enable us to repair it, in case it met with fracture.'

Again the ruffians quitted the vicinity of the chamber, but again returned to it, and in this way continued for a considerable time, walking to and fro, to the extreme agitation of the travellers, as from sentences they occasionally overheard, they were not without apprehensions of their yet endeavouring to force their way in to them.

At length to their unutterable joy, they heard one of them say.... 'Come, come, lads, this delay will never do ; whether it clears or not, we must be off directly.'

Upon which another immediately halloed.... 'Rivorola, as you are next the door, take a peep and see how the weather is.'

After the silence of a minute.... 'The rain is just over and the sky clears apace,' shouted Rivorola.

'Good news !' exclaimed the others, as if with one voice ; 'we'll to horse directly.'

Accordingly, in the course of a few minutes, the

travellers had the satisfaction of hearing them gallop off.

'Blessed be St. Benedict,' cried Mactalla, with fervour, as he heard them departing, 'for attending to my prayers.'

Osmond enjoined him silence a little longer, lest, by ways they were not aware of, some of the banditti might unexpectedly return. The idea that this might be the case induced him to remain at the door until the grey light of early day pervaded the apartment, and labourers were heard in the adjacent fields. He then, quitting the unpleasant station he had so long occupied, and approaching the ladies, offered his warmest congratulations to them on the happy termination of the perils of the night.

Miss Raymond, though by this time perfectly restored to her senses, still appeared so faint and indisposed, as did also her mother, that Osmond advised their endeavouring to obtain a little repose, ere they thought of renewing their journey.

Their following this advice, however, was strongly opposed by Mr. Raymond, in consequence of his impatience to reach Venosa, and his needing no rest himself, after the long repose he had enjoyed in the course of the night.

They appeared, however, so inclined to attend to it, that Osmond, knowing they were now in perfect safety, determined to pay no attention to Mr. Raymond's wishes for immediately departing.

In order, however, to avoid a second altercation with him, the idea of which, on account of the ladies, being highly disagreeable to his feelings, he made the absolute necessity there was for allowing the horses some little time to feed and refresh themselves, after being shut up so many hours without food, the excuse for not indulging him in the present instance.

Mr. Raymond continued with his wife and daughter, evidently angry and discontented, at his wishes, relative to setting off immediately, not being complied with; and Osmond, ordering Mactalla to remain near the chamber, proceeded himself with Felisco to liberate the horses.

The storm of the preceding night was now entirely

mercy and benevolence, could take pleasure in acts or sacrifices that doomed any of his creatures to misery, could be gratified by any vows but those which the heart dictates. Oh, ye sons of the dust, how many are the calamities ye have brought upon yourselves by your mistaken notions....your wilful indulgence of error !"

On the return of Felisco he enquired of him concerning this ruin, and learned that its dilapidation and desertion were occasioned by a dreadful earthquake many years back.

A further inspection of the building was prevented by a dreadful shout from Mactalla, occasioned by a disagreeable dream, which made him suddenly start from a slumber he had fallen into in a remote corner of the chapel.

Mr. Raymond, in great consternation, made his appearance, followed by the ladies. Osmond quickly dispelled their apprehensions by explaining the cause of the outcry they had heard, while poor Mactalla begged their pardon, and expressed as much contrition for having disturbed them as if he had purposely done so.

The party now partook of the refreshment provided by Osmond....Mrs. Raymond with grateful acknowledgments for his politeness and attention.

Mr. Raymond, however, profited by the kindness he experienced without appearing to notice it ; and still to the encreasing astonishment of Osmond, kept his face so enveloped, that not a feature was visible.

Their repast over, the party lost no time in proceeding on their journey....For some time the ladies could not sufficiently divest themselves of apprehension, to feel at ease ; at length their getting into a road bordered with fields rich in the treasures of Autumn, and scattered over with peasants, whose assistance, if requisite, Felico assured them they need not doubt obtaining, dissipated their fears, and restoring them to tranquillity, permitted them to converse as usual.

After chatting some time about the terrific incidents of the preceding night, she spoke of the manuscript with which he had amused them, saying it had furnished her with such an episode as she wanted for her Tale of Wonder.

'Well,' said Miss Raymond, with her accustomed innocence and sweetness, 'I confess notwithstanding the extravagance of the story, I could not help being a little interested about Carlo.'

'The temptation that assailed him was certainly so great,' observed Osmond, 'that one can hardly forbear mingling pity with their condemnation of him.'

'But most assuredly,' remarked Mrs. Raymond, 'he would have been more deserving of that pity, had he made an effort to resist the temptation he met with. He who voluntarily risks his honour merits but little compassion for the misery incurred by indiscretion.'

'That of Isabella is certainly entitled but to little, if any,' rejoined her lovely daughter. 'United as she was to the object of her choice, and convinced, by experience, of his meriting her affection, there was nothing to excuse, or in any manner palliate, her conduct. Let me not,' added she, with quickness, and deeply blushing, evidently in consequence of catching Osmond intently regarding her at the moment, 'be supposed to mean that I think it would have admitted of extenuation, had her situation been other than it was. Premeditated error, I am well aware, admits not of apology.'

'Oh how unnecessary,' burst from the lips of the enamoured Osmond, 'this explanation of your sentiments, to one so thoroughly sensible of....so deeply impressed with a conviction of.....'

He suddenly recollected himself, and paused....paused in the most painful confusion, and with a cheek more deeply crimsoned at the moment, than was that of the lovely object of his admiration.

'For....for,' added he, making an effort to finish the sentence in such a way as should do away the idea of the compliment it conveyed being dictated by aught but common politeness, 'it is utterly impossible that any person who has had the honour of being in Miss Raymond's company, could for an instant harbour a doubt of her not thinking correctly on every subject.'

'She would not do so,' said Mrs. Raymond, but evidently more for the purpose of diverting the attention of Osmond from her daughter, who appeared at the mo-

ment no less agitated and confused than he was, than from any wish to pursue the subject, as her immediately after dropping it proved, 'if she did not condemn the fair culprit of whom we have been speaking.'

Little further conversation, and that but of a desultory nature, ensued after this, till their arrival at Venosa, which took place ere the day was far advanced.

What the feelings of the party were, on at length finding themselves safely housed in a comfortable inn, may easier be imagined than described.

But though from the selfish concern he had throughout the journey manifested for himself, it was but natural to suppose those of Mr. Raymond not less lively on this occasion than his companions, he gave no utterance to them as they did, but in gloomy silence shrunk from the voice of congratulation, and quickly disappeared, leaving his wife and daughter alone with Osmond.

Mrs. Raymond's sensations at finding herself, and those for whom she was more interested than for herself, again in a place of safety, for a few minutes overcame her. When a little recovered, and with pious gratitude she had returned thanks to heaven for their deliverance from the dangers which had lately encompassed them, she repeated her acknowledgments to Osmond for his services on the late occasion.

'Be assured,' said she, 'while I retain the life you have been instrumental in preserving, I shall cherish the most grateful recollection of your conduct.'

'Oh, Madam, how richly do you reward me for it,' in the most impassioned tone, and raising, and respectfully pressing to his lips the hand she extended to him as she spoke; 'by the hope you have given me of retaining a place in your remembrance, nothing more was wanting to complete the obligations your condescending kindness has laid me under.'

'You acknowledge fancied obligations in so handsome a manner,' replied Mrs. Raymond, smiling, 'that I should like to have an opportunity of laying you under real ones.'

Then the present moment, by giving her liberty to say she objected not to his cultivating her further acquaint-

ance, furnished her with one for the purpose, Osmond was on the point of saying, but suddenly checked himself, under the idea of her, perhaps, deeming him presumptuous....worse, designing and interested, if such a speech escaped him.

Both ladies were so extremely fatigued, that as soon as they had partaken of a refreshment with Osmond, they retired to repose, not, however, without Mrs. Raymond desiring him to hold himself in readiness to join them at supper.

He immediately followed their example, nor awoke till the evening was somewhat advanced, when finding they were not yet risen, he procured an attendant to shew him the town.

He continued his ramble till the hour at which he understood supper was ordered. On re-entering the inn, he ascended to the apartment which the ladies occupied ; but was prevented opening the door by the intervention of a waiter, who had run up after him.

‘ Your supper, Signor,’ said he, but with a respectful bow, is prepared in another room.’

‘ What, have the ladies then changed their apartment?’ asked Osmond.

‘ O no, Signor, they are at supper in that, but the gentleman with them gave orders that your’s should be prepared for you in another room.’

‘ O, very well,’ replied Osmond, with forced calmness, but a countenance suffused with the crimson glow of indignation, ‘ shew me to it.’

The man obeyed.

Osmond seated himself at table, where supper was already laid, but which pride in vain stimulated him to make an effort to touch. In vain too did it stimulate him to try and retain that appearance of composure it had in the first instance induced him to counterfeit. The feelings by which his mind was at present agitated were too violent, too agonizing, to allow of their either being long dissembled or controlled ; and finding the impossibility of their being so, he suddenly started from the table, and desired to be shewn to his chamber, and, in order to avoid having any witness of his present emotion, his

servant to be informed he should not require his attendance until morning.

As soon as he had, in the solitude of his chamber, subdued, by the exertion of his reason, the irritation of his mind, sufficiently to permit him to reflect again with some degree of coolness, the fatal consequences that might ensue from resenting the contumelious, the injurious treatment he had just experienced, in the manner his proudly indignant spirit prompted, became too obvious not to induce him to determine on evincing his deep sense of its ingratitude and baseness, in no other way than by immediately detaching himself from the society of Mr. Raymond.

‘Was I to associate with him after what has passed, I should indeed,’ he exclaimed, ‘prove to him that I merited it...should provoke what nothing could enable me to support...my own contempt.

‘In what,’ he continued, as with disordered steps he paced his chamber, ‘can that which has marked his conduct towards me originate?’ for the deliberate insult he has offered me, there must be some cause. Surely he cannot entertain a suspicion of my being other than I have represented myself.

‘Ah!’ cried he, after a thoughtful pause of some minutes, as the idea suddenly started in his mind, ‘I now see to what his conduct towards me was owing....Yes....yes; various circumstances now recur to my recollection, to convince me that ’tis on his daughter’s account, to prevent any risk of his expectations concerning her being disappointed, that he has treated me in such a manner, doubtless concluding I should have no hesitation in attempting to take advantage of any favourable sentiment in her bosom for me. Ah, in thinking so, how much does he wrong me !...how little does he know me, when he imagines I would be capable of purchasing my own gratification at the expence of her welfare !

‘The supposition, however, I acknowledge not an unnatural one....one too, which, if much oftener in her society, future circumstances might perhaps justify ; did I think otherwise, I should arrogate too much to myself....a strength of mind, a forbearance, a command over my-

self, I feel I do not possess : yes, I feel convinced, if much longer exposed to the power of her charms, the passion with which my bosom palpitates for her could not be concealed....feel that the secret of my heart would be betrayed, and that I should but too probably seek to inspire her with corresponding sentiments.

‘ Let the consideration, therefore, of this, of the misery, the remorse I should feel for acting in such a manner, conscious as I am, from the disposition of her father, of the unhappiness an attachment to me must be productive of to her, reconcile me to the thoughts of seeing her no more....of to-morrow’s sun lighting me in all probability for ever from her.’

Both pride and prudence determined him on quitting Venosa at an early hour the ensuing day, lest otherwise he might be suspected of wishing to intrude himself on the further notice of Mr. Raymond and his family, and thus incur the imputation of a meanness he would have abhorred himself for ; or by chancing to see the fair Cordelia, betray perhaps his feelings at the thoughts of their approaching separation.

That none of the party would be at a loss to conjecture the reason of his departing so abruptly, he flattered himself. At least, the mother and daughter would do justice, he hoped, to his motives for doing so, since, if they did, he trusted they would grant him a portion of their esteem.

But in vain he strove to subdue the anguish which the idea of no more seeing the latter inspired. Time alone, he at length felt convinced, could enable him to do this.

Exhausted by the violence of his emotions, yet still from the perturbation of his mind unable to think of rest, he threw open a lattice, and in the contemplation of the majestic mountains he had to cross the ensuing day, sought to lose the reflections that now harrassed him ; but the sublime prospect they afforded had not the desired effect, nor with the involuntary admiration it excited did pleasure mingle, as would have been the case had he still retained a hope of traversing them in company with Miss Raymond, of being allowed to guide her wandering eyes

to their varied beauties....explore with her their romantic recesses.

At last he threw himself on the bed, but sleep only weighed down his eyelids, to give him up to more tormenting fancies than those by which he had been harrassed while awake. Amongst other terrifying dreams, he suddenly imagined himself, he knew not by what means, neither why or wherefore, transported to one of the extensive forests of Africa, swarming with beasts of prey, whose dreadful cries appalled his senses; and that while gazing about him, to see whether there was a possibility of extricating himself from its horrid confines, Miss Raymond, pale and fainting with terror, appeared before him, whom he instantly flew to succour, and espying an opening amongst the trees, hurried her forward, but had not proceeded far, when a rustling in the underwood behind causing him to look back, he beheld a tremendous tiger creeping after them, evidently watching for an opportunity of seizing them unawares; upon which, snatching up his lovely companion, he forced his way through all the opposing difficulties, till he came to a small glade, so beautifully sequestered, and remote from the spot in which he had been alarmed for her safety, that he thought he might venture to pause with her; but had scarcely rested her on a bank, when the formidable enemy he had borne her from; sprung from a neighbouring thicket, and with wide extended jaws and out-stretched talons, seized upon her, and carried her off, regardless of his frantic efforts to save her....efforts rendered still more violent by the tender, the agonizing tone in which she called upon him to save her.

From this dream he started, too much affected by it to be able to sleep again; the look with which Miss Raymond had regarded him, the plaintive accent in which she had addressed him in it, were impressed on his imagination....‘O, if in reality I caught such a look,’ he involuntarily exclaimed, ‘heard such an accent, where.... where would my resolution be! like the baseless fabric of a vision, I fear I should find it vanish, without leaving a wreck behind.

His present feelings still more forcibly convincing him of the necessity there was for adhering to his determination of avoiding her in future, he arose ere the sun had made its appearance, and immediately rang for Mactalla.

Instead of Mactalla, however, a man belonging to the house answered the bell.

Osmond desired his servant to be directly sent to him.

'He is gone out, Signor,' said the waiter, bowing.

'Gone out!' repeated Osmond, somewhat surprised; 'whither pray, and when?'

'I can't say where, but he left this two hours ago on horseback, and desired, should you require him before he returned, you might be informed he would not be long absent.'

'Strange where can he be gone to,' said Osmond. 'Have his companions accompanied him?'

The man replied in the negative, adding, neither of them were yet up, and desired to know whether it was his pleasure they should be called?

'No,' Osmond returned, for as he could not think of departing till the return of his servant, there was no occasion for their being disturbed.

He dismissed the man, but had scarcely done so, when the idea striking him that he should appear extremely deficient in gratitude and politeness, if in some way or other he did not take leave of Mrs. Raymond, he resolved on writing to her, and accordingly hurried from his chamber the moment he was dressed, in order to procure materials for the purpose.

He was ushered into another apartment, containing what he required, but scarcely had he been left to himself, and taken up a pen, ere the half closed door of the room was thrown open. He involuntarily looked up, and beheld Miss Raymond retreating from it.

He directly started up, unable to deny himself the pleasure of once more gazing on her; and flying after her, conjured her not to let him be pained by supposing his being in the apartment had deterred her from entering it:—adding, with a look, but an unconscious one, of tender reproach, he trusted she would not object to

doing so when he informed her he was on the point of quitting it.

‘Nay, I assure you,’ said she, returning, but in confusion, and evidently greatly agitated, ‘it was in the manner in which I saw you employed, and my not finding my mother here, as I expected:’....Osmond, for the first time, perceived the apartment he was in was the one they had occupied the preceding day....‘alone caused me to retire; but pray let me not press your writing, or I shall again withdraw.’

‘A few minutes will suffice, Madam,’ replied Osmond with a deep and involuntary sigh, a look of melancholy that proved it to have emanated from his heart, ‘to finish my letter; ’tis meant to be a brief one; but if long would still, I fear, but poorly speak the feelings of the writer....The generous, the liberal heart of your mother will, however, I trust, do these more justice than he himself capable of doing them.’

‘My mother!’ repeated Miss Raymond, with quickness, and turning her fine eyes full upon him; ‘has she any thing to say to your letter?’

‘’Tis addressed to her. She would justly have branded me with the epithet of ungrateful, at least I should have considered myself so, had I departed without expressing my high sense of the obligations her condescending goodness has laid me under.’

‘Departed!’ said Miss Raymond; ‘then I presume she added, with a varying cheek, which gave rise to suspicions and emotions in the mind of Osmond, that once transported and tortured him; since, with all his generosity, he could not avoid being at the idea of her entertaining a more than common esteem for him....with his passion, avoid being pained at the thoughts of her being involved in an attachment, which, from its hopelessness, for hopeless as have been already mentioned, he was convinced one between them must prove, could not but be of being attended with misery to her, ‘you have given up your intention of going to Naples, at least for the present?’

‘By no means, Madam; ’tis my intention to proceed thither immediately.’

'Indeed!' in an accent expressive of surprise; 'then why not write to.....but I see....I see how it is,' with quickness and suddenly starting from a thoughtful attitude, 'we have hitherto proved such troublesome companions, that,' half bowing, and affecting to smile, 'you hadly seize the first opportunity that has occurred for detaching yourself from us.'

'Good heavens!' exclaimed Osmond, with vehemence, and eyes and hands involuntarily uplifted, 'what supposition!....O, Madam! I do....I will believe,' after a transient pause, occasioned by the violence of his motions, the anguish of his wounded feelings, 'that the gentleness of your nature would not have permitted you to have given utterance to such a one, had you surmised the pain it would have inflicted on me.'

'You....you do me but justice in imagining so,' cried Miss Raymond, in a tremulous accent, and with a look which evinced his agitation being neither unobserved or unfelt by her; and a countenance expressive of such sweet, rich sorrowful repentance, for the distress she had given, she would have disarmed rage itself. 'I trust I am not capable of voluntarily giving pain to any one, much less a person whose life was risked for the preservation of me and my family.'

'O, touch not on that subject again,' interrupted Osmond, passionately: 'In risking my life for the preservation of ours, I only risked what, had you been lost, would have been insupportable to me, and therefore merit no acknowledgment: only say the supposition you have just given utterance to is not one you really entertain, and I am satisfied.'

'Then be satisfied, for I acknowledge that it is not....more,' she proceeded, deeply blushing, which proved her heart alone dictating to her at the moment....'I acknowledge that it was ungenerous, ungrateful in me, to endeavour to make you believe I ascribed your determination of detaching yourself from our society to a motive, which I was conscious it did not proceed from....yes, I must have been stupid, indeed, if I had not at once surmised it owing to....to.'....She paused, as if overpowered by confusion, and turned, with quickness, from the gaze of Osmond....'My mother,' she continued, after the si-

lence of a minute, but still averting her looks from his, 'can better explain, can better apologize than I can, forfor what,' hesitating, 'has, I am certain, been the cause of it....I therefore wish, on that account you would send her ere you depart.'

'Believe me, Madam,' returned Osmond, in the most respectful yet impassioned tone, 'in any other instance your wishes would be as laws to me, but to linger here merely for the purpose of letting Mrs. Raymond be pained by apologizing for conduct'. ..(Osmond perfectly comprehended Miss Raymond's alluding to her father, in what she had just said,)....' which she could not prevent, is what I cannot possibly think of.'

'Well, Sir,' said Miss Raymond, again speaking collectedly, and making a movement towards the door, 'I shall say no more on the subject, only this, that I know my mother's sentiments on it so well, I am convinced her regret for the past will be aggravated by not having had a personal opportunity of apologizing for it.'

'Then she knows not what is passing here,' exclaimed Osmond, laying his hand involuntarily on his breast, and the secret of his heart, through the agitation of his feelings, bursting from his lips; 'or instead of regretting, she should rejoice at what has happened, since a means of restoring me to prudence, to recollection, of banishing me a society I could no longer indulge myself in with impunity. Need I explain the purport of these words?....O no, surely no!....you cannot be so unconscious of your own perfections as to be at a loss to understand me.'

'I see, Sir,' said Miss Raymond, as if she had not heard this speech, 'I have interrupted you; besides I wish to enquire when we shall set off. I will now therefore bid you adieu.'

She uttered these words with so distant an air, and in accents so equally cold and repelling, that Osmond concluded he had offended her. The surmise wounded him to the soul, and instantly led him to believe he had completely deceived himself, with regard to the idea which but a few minutes before her extreme agitation, her varying colour, her half-averted eye, had induced him to yield to.

Silently and dejectedly he hastened before her to open the door, but at the very moment he laid his hand upon the lock, he involuntarily turned towards her, unable to endure the thoughts of letting her leave him in pleasure....leave him too perhaps under the idea of his being a selfish, designing, presumptuous character.

'I perceive, Madam,' cried he, in the most deprecating accent, 'I have been so unfortunate as to offend you, and you look into my heart, you would be convinced I was unintentionally....then see, that with my admiration, and adoration of you, one presumptuous thought never mingled; that for an instant I forgot not how lost to feeling, to generosity, I should be, to wish to excite in your bosom a corresponding sentiment; that a hint of those I entertain for you never would have escaped my ears, but for the violent agitation of my feelings. Let this assurance, therefore, appease the resentment their disclosure has excited....let it do more; let it induce you to....to.....' his voice faltered through emotion, 'induce you to soften the excruciating pang of this moment, by saying you forgive me.'

CHAP. XI.

'All Nature fades extinct; and she alone
 Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,
 Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.
 Books are but formal dulness, tedious friends,
 And sad amid the social band he sits,
 Lonely and inattentive. From his tongue
 Th' unfinished period falls; while, borne away
 On swelling thought, his wafted spirit flies
 To the vain bosom of his distant fair,
 And leaves the semblance of a lover fix'd
 In melancholy site, with head declin'd,
 And love-dejected eyes.'

THOMSON.

'FORGIVE you!' repeated Miss Raymond, emphatically, and pausing; 'Oh, Mr. Munro,' she added, and again averted her face from him.

Osmond, scarcely conscious of what he was about, so greatly was he agitated by the sight of her agitation and

emotion....an agitation, an emotion that revived in full force the idea he had been on the point of abandoning as illusive, advanced a little way from the door....

‘I....I meant to have said, Mr. Munro,’ resumed Miss Raymond, quickly recovering herself a little, and trying to speak with something like gaiety....‘that I am not quite so easily offended as you imagine, or rather that I must be conscious of there being an intention to offend ere I can feel so. As a proof that I acquit you of all such intention, in short, that you were entirely mistaken in imputing anger to me, permit me now to offer you my best wishes for.....’ again her voice faltered a little, ‘your health and happiness.’

She attempted to pass him as she spoke, but the feelings of Osmond had too completely got the ascendancy over him at the moment, to permit him to allow of her retiring without hearing him express the gratitude with which this goodness, this gentleness inspired him. Accordingly he gently seized her hand, as she moved towards the door. He lifted it to his quivering lips, he laid it for an instant to his throbbing heart, he folded it, for the first, and the last time, he believed, between his; he rested his cheek, pale and chilled by despair, for a moment on it.

At length....‘Words are inadequate,’ he said, but in broken accents, ‘to express what I feel for your condescending goodness. My wishes, my prayers for your felicity, can best, can only demonstrate the gratitude it has inspired....O may they prove more successful than those I have uttered for my own now appear likely to do. May fortune, may fate, in every instance prove as kind to you as nature has been: may your destiny,’ he continued, with encreasing energy, and dropping involuntarily on one knee, ‘be as gentle as your nature. Above all, may this dear, this inestimable hand,’ again his lips touched it, ‘never belong to any one who does not thoroughly merit the happiness it will confer upon him; let me but be assured it is the rich treasure of such a being, and the pangs of hopeless love will be lessened.’

Miss Raymond started, and made another but a faint effort, and of consequence an unsuccessful one, to disen-

gaze her hand. This effort was quickly followed by a tear, which dropping on the hand of Osmond, caused him in his turn to start, and eagerly elevate his eyes to her face.

She turned it with quickness from him, but notwithstanding which he perceived that it was pale and covered with tears.

This was not a sight to calm his emotion; kissing away the tear which had just fallen on his hand, he pressed hers still more fervently to his heart, and again bowed his head on it.

The door was suddenly thrown open as he did so. He started, and looking up, beheld Mrs. Raymond.

The sensations of this moment nearly overcame him. He knew not how he recovered his feet, he knew not how Miss Raymond vanished from the room, he knew not how he regained his own; he was conscious of nothing for some minutes, but that he must appear in the eyes of Mrs. Raymond, surprised as he had been by her at the feet of her daughter, a mean, despicable, designing character; as such, no doubt, be represented by her to the lovely Cordelia, to the utter destruction, in all probability, of that esteem which, without incurring the imputation of selfishness, he thought he might wish her to cherish for him.

‘But I merit....I merit,’ in bitterness of soul he cried, and passionately striking his throbbing forehead, ‘the wretchedness, the idea of their degrading opinion makes me suffer....merit it, for having acted so contrary to the dictates of reason, of prudence, of generosity, as I have done in the recent instance. Instead of any longer censuring, how warmly will Mrs. Raymond now probably applaud the repelling conduct of her husband towards me, now that she has such reason to believe the suspicions that occasioned it well founded.’

An hour passed away in the bitterest self-reproaches. The noise of a carriage then drew him to a lattice, which commanded a view of the street, and he beheld the Raymonds stepping into a chaise, which immediately drove off well attended.

‘They are gone then,’ said he, ‘gone for ever from

my view....gone, without leaving me the consolation of thinking I shall retain that place in their remembrance I wished for.

'O, fool!' again striking his forehead, as the idea suddenly occurred, 'not to endeavour to justify myself in the opinion of Mrs. Raymond, whilst I had an opportunity.'

The injustice he had been guilty of towards himself, in not endeavouring to see her....worse, the impropriety, the cruelty he had been guilty of, with regard to Miss Raymond, in not trying to exculpate her, in the eyes of her mother, of the imprudence which the recent scene might naturally occasion her to be suspected of, now struck him too forcibly not to renew, or rather aggravate his anguish. At length, unable longer to submit quietly to his torturing reflections, he again rang, to enquire for Mactalla, and hearing he was not yet come back, wrote a few hasty lines to be given to him in case he returned, which he was now almost beginning to think was not his intention, desiring him to lose no time in following him to Naples; and quitting his chamber, mounted the horse which he had ordered to be prepared for him, and accompanied by Felisco, whose surprise at the conduct of Mactalla seemed quite as great as his, set forward on his journey, attended also by the French boy.

In another frame of mind, the sublime scenery which met his view as he ascended the Appennines, would have excited the liveliest transports in his soul; but now he gazed on all without emotion....so true is it, that to be able to enjoy the beauties of Nature, the mind must be at ease. Like Hamlet, it went so heavily with his disposition at the moment, that he might have said....

'This goodly frame the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy the air, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire appear nothing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.'

The tears of the lovely Cordelia, her agitation in the recent scene, dwelt on his imagination, and awakened ideas that at once tortured and delighted him....Yes, he could not forbear thinking, from the emotion she had evinced, that he had inspired her with a warmer senti-

ment than esteem. As he thought so....thought on the probability there was of her being yet compelled to give her hand where she could not altogether bestow her heart....on the possibility there was of his meeting another woman inclined to grant him her's, without his wishing to accept it, the Poet's observation recurred to his recollection, that....

..... 'For aught that ever he could read,
 Could ever hear by tale or history,
 The course of true love never did run smooth;
 But either it was different in blood,
 Or else misgrated in respect of years,
 Or else it stood upon the choice of friends:
 Or if there were a sympathy in choice,
 War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
 Making it momentary as a sound,
 Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
 Brief as the lightning in the colly'd night,
 That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth;
 And ere a man hath power to say....Behold!
 The jaws of darkness do devour it up,
 So quick bright things come to confusion '

His meditations were suddenly interrupted by Felisco's riding up to inform him Mactalla was approaching. He immediately stopped, and turning, beheld him pushing forward with all his might.

'Upon my word,' Osmond exclaimed, on his coming within hearing, 'this is rather an unexpected sight, as I felt almost inclined to imagine, Mr. Mactalla, that you had taken yourself entirely off.'

'By the Powers and so I feared you would, Signor,' said Mactalla, stopping within a yard or two of him, 'and therefore I risked my neck by the haste I made to overtake you, notwithstanding which I was almost beginning to think I should not have succeeded in doing so.'

'And pray may I enquire,' resumed his master, 'what took you from Venosa?'

'You shall hear Signor; and when you do, I trust you'll excuse my having quitted it without your leave, and also allow that I have done the business on which I went cleanly and cleverly, and for once prove that eaten bread is not always forgotten.'

'What business?' demanded his master.

'Why surely, Signor, it can't have slipt your memory

the promise I made in the midst of our recent dangers, to make a handsome acknowledgment to St. Benedict, for his kindness and protection, if we got safely through them.'

Osmond nodded.... 'I remember,' said he.

'Well, then, Signor, convinced that I should never prosper if I did not keep that promise, and moreover fearing such a good opportunity as offered at Venosa for fulfilling it might not occur again, I rose betimes this morning, for the purpose of visiting his convent, and, as I have already said, had the satisfaction of getting the business that took me there settled in the manner I wished.... My offering to him was most graciously accepted in his name by one of the holy fathers, and who in return assured me I might pursue the remainder of my journey to Naples without any apprehension, as I had, by my conduct on this occasion, fully secured to myself the protection of the Saint. One thing indeed liked to have marred all; I forgot at first to mention how many beside myself were indebted to him; an additional offering, however, on their account, quickly set matters to right again, by appeasing the anger the holy father felt at my negligence.'

Osmond could not forbear smiling at the simplicity which this anecdote argued Mactalla possessed of. His smile, however, was unaccompanied by any indication of that contempt which such simplicity might have excited in a more fastidious and less benevolent mind. He who performed what he conceived to be a duty, was, in his opinion, an object of respect and admiration, however superfluous or ridiculous that duty might appear in the eyes of sound reason.

'Accept my thanks, my good friend,' said he, with a gracious smile, 'for your kind remembrance of me on the late occasion. Your tribute of gratitude to St. Benedict, on my account, has laid me under obligations, which I shall take the earliest opportunity of evincing my sense of.'

'What basket is that you have got dangling on your arm?' asked Felisco, pointing to one on the left arm of Mactalla.

'Basket! by the Powers but I'd like to have forgot;

'tis a basket of provisions which a pious lady, who chanced to hear my account of my late adventures, gave me to drop with an old hermit, as I passed over these mountains; and who, by what I gathered from the shepherds, of whom I enquired concerning him as I came along, has his hut perched some where in this quarter.'

'He has,' said Felisco; 'if you elevate your eyes, you may see it on that high mountain that rises above the wooded ones to the left.'

'By the Powers and so I do,' cried Mactalla, joyfully; 'what an admirer of fine prospects the old gentleman must be, to build his nest so high. Come, Felisco, as you know all the inns and outs of these mountains, be so good as to guide me to it, for I faithfully promised the lady (who by the bye made me a handsome present for the trouble I undertook on her account) to give the basket with my own hands into his; besides, I would not for the world lose the opportunity of obtaining the benediction of so holy a man.'

Felisco consented, and Osmond having a wish to see a place of the kind, and conceiving besides, as they had by this time come a good way, that the horses required a little rest, alighted to join the party....Accordingly, the horses being secured, and the French boy left to watch them, they began to ascend to the hermitage.

The way to it was by zig-zag paths, many of them cut into steps, and almost all either shaded with trees and bushes, forming in many places delightful bowers, or fenced in with shrubby cliffs, bespread with beautiful lichens, wild thyme, and flowers....

* Amongst which the bee stray'd diligent,
And with the extracted balm of fragrant woodbine,
Fill'd his little thigh.'

Through a small wilderness, they arrived at the little lawn on which the hermitage was erected. 'Twas fronted by perpendicular rocks of immense height, some naked and discoloured by time, others embossed with luxuriant mosses, and tufted with wild plants and shrubs. The mountain in the rear was broken into a variety of fantastic forms, wild, savage, pathless, and from its pen-

dant precipices, and terrific height, evidently inaccessible to all but the light foot of the fearless chamois. Forest of pine, larch, and chesnut, cloathed its steep sides, apparently coeval with itself.

‘The vivid flowers that enamelled the verdant surface of the lawn, the richly glowing and aromatic shrubs that skirted the rocks that enclosed it, formed a smiling contrast to the rude and gloomy scene beyond.

On one side the hermitage was a small garden, containing a few vegetables and fruit trees; on the other bubbling up amongst some white stones, a natural fountain, supplied by the clear springs of the heights above.

The hermit was then out; and Mactalla depositing the basket in the hut, repaired with Felisco to look for him in the woods.

Osmond preferred remaining behind, to contemplate without interruption the surrounding scenery, or more probably indulge the reflections it was calculated to inspire.

From a pensive reverie he was suddenly roused by a rustling noise in the inner chamber of the hermitage, at the outer door of which he was leaning at the moment, for the return of its owner, to examine it minutely. He turned his eyes towards this, and to his utter surprise beheld Mrs. Raymond advancing from it.

‘Gracious heaven!’ involuntarily, and in extreme agitation, he exclaimed, ‘is it possible....do I really behold Mrs. Raymond!’

‘Why, is there any thing so very astonishing in finding a woman gratifying her curiosity?’ returned Mrs. Raymond. ‘We stopt about an hour ago at a little auberge in the neighbourhood, for the purpose of baiting the horses, and having previously heard a great deal of this hermitage, I resolved to avail myself of the opportunity that had thus occurred for visiting it....A little fatigued by the time I reached it, I sat down to rest myself, while my guides went in search of a shepherd’s hut, to try and procure me some refreshment.’

‘O, now....now,’ thought Osmond, ‘have I again an opportunity of endeavouring to exculpate myself in her opinion....more, endeavouring to exculpate her lovely

daughter, if, indeed, so wronged as to be suspected of imprudence by her.'

Still, notwithstanding the idea that another of the kind might not again occur, he could not for some minutes summon sufficient courage to enter upon the explanation he wished to make. At length, but in the most timid accent, he ventured to entreat her attention for a few moments....but was for an instant after unable to articulate another word, owing to the confusion into which her, he conceived, severe look, but which in reality was only a scrutinizing one, threw him.

'It is essential to my future tranquillity, Madam,' on a little recovering from this, he said, 'that you should comply with my request.'

'Well, Sir,' on his again pausing, said Mrs. Raymond, seating herself, as she spoke, on a sod seat outside the hut, 'what have you to say to me?'

'Oh, Madam, more than I fear my feelings will allow me to give utterance to....yes, notwithstanding my anxiety to retain a place in your remembrance....that place which you so lately honoured me with a hope of possessing....I knew not that I should be able to make an effort for the purpose, at least at the present moment, so depressed, so humbled, so completely overthrown, I may say, is my mind by recent occurrences; but on account of.....of Miss Raymond,' he added, falteringly, and in a still lower voice, 'tis due to her, to you....I feel it to be due to both, to declare, in order to prevent that sweet, that delightful harmony and confidence subsisting between you being interrupted, that solely to my temerity, my indiscretion, my imprudence, the scene you witnessed at Venosa was owing. I opposed, I impeded, I prevented Miss Raymond's withdrawing, yet not from any presumptuous hope or thought....no, I protest, by all my hopes of happiness hereafter, I call upon heaven to attest the truth of the declaration, but solely to despair....to the agonizing persuasion of no more having an opportunity of gazing on her, whom of all beings my eyes most delighted to dwell on.....Yes, Madam,' he continued, but with eyes inclining towards the ground, and a rising blush upon his cheek, bright as the maiden blush of

youthful beauty, 'I can no longer conceal that I adore your lovely daughter. The frankness with which I avow my passion, will, I hope, be a means of inducing you to forego any injurious opinion you may have conceived of me, in consequence of the scene I have just alluded to; since surely it must strike you, that if artful, if designing, I would not reveal a truth, calculated, I must be conscious, by putting you on your guard against me, to deprive me of all opportunities of accomplishing my wishes.'

He then, but still in the most deprecating tone, conjured her to lighten the anguish of his present feelings, by permitting him to hope he had not irreparably injured himself in her esteem, or laid the foundation of any unhappiness between her and her daughter.

To this entreaty Mrs. Raymond made no reply. Osmond, after awaiting one in silence some minutes, ventured to steal another look at her, and saw, or fancied he saw, a gloomy thoughtfulness on her brow, which confirmed all the fears her silence had inspired.

'Ah, Madam,' he said, under the painful impression of these fears, 'I see I am doomed to become the victim of appearances; since you judge me by these, I cannot wonder at your withholding from me the assurance I have entreated. Time, however, may yet convince you I was not altogether as undeserving of it as I am sensible you now imagine. Yes, my henceforth shunning the sight of your lovely daughter, will yet, I trust, prove to you I was sincere, when I said that I never for an instant forgot the obstacles fortune had placed between us, the baseness I should be guilty of in attempting to involve her in my precarious fate. Oh, Madam,' he added, with encreasing emotion, 'were you acquainted with my family history, the agonizing observations I had an early opportunity of making on the misery incurred by drawing a beloved object into an imprudent engagement, you would...yes, I am certain you would acquit me of all intention of having done so myself. But your attendants approach,' observing two strangers advancing. 'Farewell, Madam,' in a broken voice, he added, this involuntary recurrence of his thoughts to home...that

home so dear to his regard, so interesting to his feelings, so truly venerated, round which the warmest affections of his heart still hovered, having revived a thousand tender recollections, which completely overcame him....

'farewell,' retreating as he spoke.

'Stop, Mr. Munro, stop,' cried Mrs. Raymond, hastily rising, and laying her hand on his arm; 'be not so precipitate, she added, a smile brightening her fine features.

'Good heaven, is it possible!....can it be,' with all the wildness of surprise exclaimed Osmond, 'that the mother, like the daughter, is an angel of forgiveness!'

Mrs. Raymond pointed to a wild sequestered path at the back of the hermitage.....He directly led her to it, the men he had just seen being now at hand. On advancing some way in it, she paused, and....

'What I really am,' cried she, in an emphatic accent, and raising her hand, impressively, 'you do not yet know, nor can possibly conjecture; but the period is at hand in which you'll be enlightened on the subject; besides the tale of wonder, which our recent adventures have furnished me with for my friends in general, I have one for your private ear in particular, which I am inclined to think will astonish you quite as much, if not more, than that will them....a tale, which though not exactly calculated to....

'Freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine,'

nevertheless contains sufficient of the marvellous to astonish you. Ask me no questions now,' added she, with quickness, seeing the lips of Osmond sever; 'your curiosity cannot be gratified till I arrive in Naples, nor then, except in every instance you attend to the instructions I shall now give you.

'After what occurred last night, I cannot think of asking you to attach yourself to our society for the present; but take heed not to lose sight of the carriage in which we travel; at least, be particularly careful to keep it in

view on its approach to Naples. A house is already prepared for us there, but we shall sleep the first night of our arrival at an hotel; and wherever we lodge for that night, I wish you also to take up your quarters, that I may the next morning have an opportunity of conversing with you. And now that you may have something to remind you of what I have been saying, take this,' drawing a ring from her finger, and offering it to him.

'Remind me, Madam!' repeated Osmond, with emphasis. 'Good heaven!' colouring violently, and drawing back, 'surely you cannot think it possible I require any thing for that purpose.'

'Well, since you will not accept it on that account, accept it for another,' said Mrs. Raymond, smiling; 'accept it for the purpose of reminding you of my friendship, of my having more than a common esteem for you.'

'Oh, Madam!' in accents which spoke the fulness of his heart, 'your conduct on the present occasion renders any further proof of that unnecessary.'

'Well, I will urge the matter no further,' said Mrs. Raymond, with seeming carelessness; 'indeed I know not that I am perfectly justified in parting with this, since it was a present from Cordelia.'

'Cordelia!' echoed Osmond, with emotion so violent as to shake his frame, and involuntarily catching the hand which held the proffered gift.

'Yes, a present from my daughter.'

'Ah, Madam!' cried Osmond, and gently disengaging the inestimable ring from her hand, he pressed it to his lips; 'but what am I to think....what am I to infer from this?' he suddenly exclaimed, as if starting from a dream, and again looking not only with earnestness, but a degree of wildness at Mrs. Raymond.

'You are to infer,' replied she, again laying her hand on his arm, and looking with mingled complacency and tenderness in his face, 'that virtue, sooner or later, will, even in this life, meet a reward; that let cynics say what they will to the contrary, real happiness may be experienced here by those who steadily pursue the road of rectitude; in short, that innocence and goodness, like patience and industry, are blessings that assuredly lay the foundation

for others. But endeavour to compose yourself....my daughter accompanied me to the hermitage, and not being so fatigued as I was by the ascent to it, went with its holy inmate to view a curious grotto, a little way off; I expect her back by this time, and know she will be uneasy should she not find me where we parted. I must, therefore, leave you now, but if you choose, you may by and bye follow me.'

Then kissing her hand to him, she hurried back to the hermitage.

For some minutes after she left him Osmond was inclined to believe himself under the influence of a dream, so strange, so incredible did what had recently occurred appear to him....so strange, so incredible, that he should meditate as her looks, her words, above all, the circumstances of the ring tended to persuade him she did, favouring his passion for her daughter....a daughter for whom she had such just reason to expect a splendid alliance.

The only way in which he could account for such an intention, was by concluding she possessed an independent fortune, and saw no other means of preventing the lovely girl becoming the victim of a stern and inexorable father's ambition, than by consigning her to his arms.... 'Yes....yes, it must be so,' he mentally exclaimed, 'it must be to a conviction of this nature....a conviction but too probably derived from painful self-experience of the inability of wealth and splendour alone to confer happiness on the feeling heart, that her intention of rendering me the most blest....most enviable of men is owing.... And will Cordelia....the lovely, the divine Cordelia herself....will she, whom nature and education have so eminently qualified to shine in the most distinguished circles....will she acquiesce in this intention? will she be reconciled to her moderate views respecting her?....O yes, my heart assures me she will; the proofs of reciprocal tenderness, which her agitation, her emotion in our recent interview betrayed....those delightful proofs which prudence no longer interdicts my dwelling on, convince me beyond a doubt, she will. Besides, I am convinced Mrs. Raymond would not have the cruelty to

inspire hopes, at least of such a nature she has given birth to in my bosom, without beholding a certainty of their being realized, since she must be aware that there is a wide difference between the feelings excited by the vanishing of the happiness we never expected to possess, and that we had every hope of calling ours.'

Having a little subdued his agitation, he retraced his way back to the hermitage, and found the amiable mother and lovely daughter sitting beneath the shadow of a cliff, with the refreshments the attendants had succeeded in procuring, spread upon the turf before them, and at a little distance conversing with them the hermit, an old man of eighty; but notwithstanding his advanced age, still retaining a tinge on his cheek, and an animation in his eyes, that proved his faculties were unimpaired, and that he possessed health and tranquillity.

But interesting as such an object would have been at another period to Osmond, he had now for some minutes only eyes for Miss Raymond, owing to his anxiety to learn whether she had yet received any intimation of her mother's surmised intentions, and how she felt on the subject, both which he flattered himself he should be able to discover by her countenance; nor was he mistaken....the mantling blush that suffused it at his approach, the blended confusion and pleasure with which she half met, half avoided, his ardent gaze, convinced him, that she was not only acquainted with, but rejoiced at them.

At the motion of her mother he took a seat beside her, and by those delicate, those nameless attentions which the enamoured heart can alone dictate, gave her silently to understand what was then passing in his.

At length Mrs. Raymond, wishing to give her daughter an opportunity of endeavouring to overcome the emotion she was evidently in, sought to divert his attention by directing it to the hermit.

The venerable man, after conversing some time with them, was called away for some minutes by the return of Mactalla, who, besides the present, was charged with a message to him.

This is solitude indeed,' said Mrs. Raymond, on his

withdrawing out of hearing; 'but a solitude not appalling to the senses.... True,' continued she, with quickness, anticipating the observations she saw Osmond on the point of making, 'we now see it under the most favourable circumstances, illumed with sunshine, and adorned with the rich and variegated beauties of Autumn. But when the storms arise, and foul and fierce all winter drives along the troubled air, when the foliage of the forest lies in rude heaps upon the earth, and the brows of the mountains, instead of being veiled, as now, in light clouds, are covered with snow, I can easily picture to myself what a savage scene it must present to the view. How deplorable the situation of its inhabitant must then be !'

'But though this were not the case, it chills one to think of a human creature being so secluded from his species. I can scarcely think that any thing short of the total overthrow of his hopes and happiness can induce any one voluntarily to abjure society.'

'A social and benevolent spirit naturally thinks so,' said Osmond ; 'but, alas ! there are too many proofs of the reverse to admit a doubt on the subject being the case. Superstition and false notions of religion have often the same effect upon the mind, that a long series of suffering sometimes has, namely, that of creating gloom and misanthropy, and destroying all those social principles implanted in our nature, for the promotion of our own happiness and that of our species, and those corresponding sympathies, from the exercise and experience of which man derives his highest felicity.'

'But doubtless sorrow sometimes gives a tenant to the hermitage.... a devotee to the monastic cell ?' rejoined Mrs. Raymond.

'Assuredly,' returned Osmond. 'I am well aware there are sorrows which must render a continuance in busy life insupportable to the feeling heart. When the gates of death are closed upon his prospects, then, then, indeed, I do not wonder at a man's shrinking into solitude.'

'But though we may not be able to persuade ourselves that the hermit's life is a pleasant one,' said Mrs. Raymond, pursuing the conversation the surrounding scenery gave

rise to, 'one cannot avoid thinking the shepherd's must be a delightful one in these charming regions. hundred times I journeyed along, and caught a glimpse the delicious solitudes they inhabit, the luxuriant plain on which they feed their flocks, the peace and tranquility that appear to preside over their pine-shadowed and romantically situated dwellings; and contrasted these the anxieties and dissensions that prevail but too much the crowded haunts of men, I could not forbear think that here, at least, as Shakespeare says, it were....

' A happy life,

To be no better than a homely swain,
To sit upon a hill as we do now,
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,
Thereby to see the minutes how they run :
How many makes the hour full compleat,
How many hours bring about the day,
How many days will finish up the year,
How many years a mortal man may live,
When this is known to divide the time....
So many hours must I tend my flock,
So many hours must I take my rest,
So many hours must I contemplate,
So many hours must I sport myself;
So many days my ewes have been with young,
So many weeks ere the poor fools will yearn,
So many months ere I shall shear the fleece....
So minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years,
Past over to the end they were created,
Would bring white hairs unto a quiet grave.'

' That the character into whose mouth Shakespeare put that beautiful speech should think such a life as was a lovely one, is not surprising,' said Osmond. ' It is natural for the unfortunate Henry, encompassed as he was by danger, and harrassed and perplexed in every direction to think....

' The hawthorn bush gave a sweeter shade
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy,
To kings that fear their subjects treachery'....

That

' The shepherd's homely curds,
His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,
All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,

Is far beyond a Prince's delicacies,
His viands sparkling in a golden cup,
His body couched in a curious bed,
When care, mistrust, and treasons wait on him.*

At length the hermit reappeared, and after a little further conversation with him, in the course of which Osmond, but in the most delicate manner, endeavoured to discover whether it was misfortune had driven him to seek 'this solitude forlorn,' and was informed, that his taking up his abode in it was solely the result of inclination, the party took leave of him.

How so old a man could possibly scramble up and down such mountains, to procure for himself the necessities of life, was a matter of astonishment to Osmond and his fair companions. In their way from his abode, however, they learned from Felisco, that this was a fatigue he had long been exempt from, by the humanity, or rather piety of the people in the neighbourhood, who for their charitable contributions, conceived themselves well repaid by his prayers, so great was his reputation for sanctity.

'Aye, so they say,' rejoined Mactalla; 'the lady who sent him the basket gave me to understand they mean to make a Saint of him as soon as he dies; and so they may if they please....but neither new nor old Saint will ever rival good St. Benedict in my regard.'

In their descent Mrs. Raymond entrusted to Osmond the care of her daughter, and thus afforded him an opportunity of giving utterance, in some degree, to the transports of his heart.

'O, my Cordelia,' he softly, and perhaps involuntarily whispered to her, as with cautious tenderness he guided her down the declivity, 'how richly does this moment, which gives to me the liberty of styling you so, compensate me for all I have lately suffered! O, thus, thus,' and for an instant he strained her to his throbbing heart, 'thus may we journey onward....thus may I be permitted to assist and support you through any difficulties that may occur; say but that you participate in my present happiness,' eagerly endeavouring to catch a glance

from her half-averted eyes, 'and who in this world can be happier than I shall.'

'I....I ever,' but not without a little hesitation and a rising blush, replied his lovely mistress, 'participate in the happiness of my friends.'

Osmond rapturously kissed her hand....'Words are inadequate to express the feelings this goodness inspires,' said he, 'but my actions will yet, I trust, demonstrate the effect it has upon me.'

The prospects that in various directions met the view of the party, caused them frequently to pause in their descent....Here they beheld magnificent cascades, foaming down stupendous precipices....there, rich vineyards and fertile plains, diversified with clumps of trees, tinted with the golden hues of Autumn, and half shrouding the cottages of those whose flocks were scattered over them. The froth and green tincture of the falling waters, the astonishing echoes of the rocks, amongst which they dashed, the striking contrast produced by the fertility of the plains, and the barrenness of the steepes that overhung them, the immense ridges of mountains that extended on every side, and the deep gloom of their vast forests, altogether produced a scene of the most romantic and impressive kind, such as completely satisfied taste and fancy.

The pleasing sensations which it inspired were presently damped, however, by a message which awaited the ladies, at the spot where the French boy was stationed with the horses.

Incensed at what he conceived their long absence, Mr. Raymond dispatched a messenger, to inform them of the displeasure it had excited and desired they might not lose a moment in rejoining him.

The cheek of Osmond kindled at the terms in which his wish for their return was expressed. He restrained the indignation, however, it gave rise to in his mind, and respectfully kissing the hand of each, took leave of them for the present.

He continued on the spot where they had parted till they quitted the auberge, then vaulted on his horse, and followed quickly after their carriage.

How changed did now the face of nature appear to him! From the revolution his feelings had undergone, every thing again looked gay and smiling around him; and restored, if not to calmness, at least to happiness, he was now able to do ample justice to the picturesque scenery through which he travelled.

The remainder of the journey passed without any occurrence worth mentioning....It was late when the party entered Naples, and so dark, that Osmond had some difficulty in keeping up with the carriage of his fair friends.

They alighted at one of the principal hotels, and as soon as they were accommodated, he desired to be shewn to an apartment. He was obeyed, and immediately after supper, retired to repose.

Long as it was since he had had an opportunity of enjoying any, still his anticipations of the events of the ensuing day kept him awake, for a considerable time after he had laid his head on the pillow.

At length Somnus laid his leaden sceptre on his eyelids, nor removed it until the morning was far advanced.

On rising he rang for Mactalla, and anxious to know whether Mrs. Raymond had been enquiring for him, demanded, the instant he made his appearance, with a palpitating heart, but seeming carelessness, whether any one had been asking for him?

‘O, no, not a soul, Signor,’ replied Mactalla; ‘indeed, as his Grace the Duke D’Amalfi does not yet know of your arrival, I don’t know who should, seeing that you are quite a stranger here.’

‘True,’ replied Osmond; ‘but....but,’ in some confusion, ‘what I meant was, whether Mrs. Raymond had been making any enquiry for me this morning?’

‘She! O no, not she!....she didn’t open her lips about you.’

‘You saw her then,’ said Osmond, with quickness; ‘at least I think I am to infer so from your answer.’

‘O yes, I saw her at least an hour and a half ago.’

‘An hour and a half ago!’ repeated Osmond, in the most impatient accent, and totally forgetting himself, ‘and not call me?’

‘Call you!....for what then?....I am sure you wanted

a good sleep, after all the fatigue you have lately undergone : besides, even if I had called you, I am sure you would not have had an opportunity of speaking to her, she was in such a hurry going, or rather Mr. Raymond was in such a hurry taking her away.'

'Taking her away!' repeated Osmond, starting back and surveying Mactalla with a wild stare....'and....and Miss Raymond,' he faltered out with all the agitation of alarm, 'did he take her away also?'

'That he did,' said Mactalla, 'bag and baggage....he took them all clean off.'

'But....probably his address is known by the people of the house,' cried Osmond, a little recovering himself from the idea of this being the case.

'No.'

'Why, how do you know whether it is or is not?' in a passionate tone, he demanded.

'Because I enquired,' answered Mactalla.

'And how....which way,' with encreasing vehemence, he asked, 'did they go?'

'They went in a coach,' returned Mactalla, with the greatest coolness, 'and turned to the left.'

'You saw them going then?'

'Yes.'

'And why not pursue them....how were you employed that you did not do so?'

'Why, Signor, I was in a little room that fronts the street, getting the Jewish ornament, which, against my inclination, I had so long worn upon my chin, taken off by a French barber I chanced to light upon; but even though I hadn't been thus engag'd, I don't know that I should have pursued them, seeing I didn't know of any reason I had to do so.'

'O, you have undone me....you have undone me by not following them!' exclaimed Osmond, passionately, and striking his forehead. 'My dream of happiness is over,' he cried, pacing the room....yes....yes,' to himself, 'this is the work of Mr. Raymond. He, doubtless, by some means or other, suspected the intentions of his wife respecting me, and has carried her off in this manner, in order to prevent the fulfilment of them: but I will not

quietly rest under such a disappointment; I should merit the loss of the felicity thus snatched from me, if I did not make an effort to recover it. Pray,' again addressing Mactalla, 'did you overhear no direction given to the coachman?'

'Why, I thought, Signor, that I heard that sinner, Mr. Raymond....for, by the lord, if his countenance, which, notwithstanding all his care to conceal, I caught a glimpse of once or twice, don't belie him, he is one....say something about the Largo Castilio.'

'Run this instant then,' said Osmond, 'and procure me a guide thither.'

'Lord, Signor,' cried Mactalla, whose astonishment at the wildness of his gestures was unspeakable, and which, as he at present had no suspicion of the strong attachment between him and Miss Raymond, he was almost inclined to impute to a brain disordered by fatigue and long anxiety, 'had you not better breakfast before you set out on your rambles? besides, there's his Grace the Duke D'Amalfi....to be sure he expects the first thing you'll do upon your arrival here is to pay him a visit.'

'I am not in a state of mind to pay him one now,' answered Osmond; 'but to-morrow, perhaps,' he added, after a little hesitation, owing to the irreparable injury he suddenly reflected he might do himself with this nobleman, if he acted in any manner calculated to give him offence, as he could not but acknowledge his not hastening to pay his respects to him was, and, besides, the ingratitude such conduct would manifest towards his amiable and valued friends at Acerenza, 'I hope to be sufficiently recovered to do so. In the course of the day, however, you shall go to his palace with a letter from me, to acquaint him of my arrival, and enquire when it will be agreeable to have me pay my respects to him, for men in his public situation are not always at leisure or disposed to receive visitors.'

'That, I will, Signor,' said Mactalla, joyfully, recovering from the consternation which the idea of Osmond's not meaning to go near the Duke D'Amalfi, whom he looked upon as their sheet anchor at Naples, had thrown him into.

‘Very well....and now,’ in a hurried accent, ‘hasten to procure me the guide I require.’

Mactalla finding it in vain to remonstrate against this measure, withdrew to obey him.

‘Yes,’ continued Osmond, on Mactalla’s retiring, ‘I’ll make every exertion to discover Mrs. Raymond; and if fortunate enough to succeed, will take care not to lose sight of her again, except assured the intentions she flattered me with hopes of entertaining are altered.

‘Well, Signor,’ cried Mactalla, returning in a few minutes, accompanied by a well-dressed lad, ‘I have brought you such a person as you want: this young lad, Paulo Zerbi, says he knows every inch of Naples; and to be sure ’tis not wonderful he should, seeing he was born and bred here, since I myself, who was never here before, know a good deal of it; as for instance, I know that here are squares, streets, lanes, and alleys....then there are churches, convents, chapels, and.....’

‘Fools!’ interrupted Osmond, passionately, his impatience to commence his search being unspeakable: ‘do you mean,’ he added, with a look, and in an accent very unusual with him, ‘to drive me entirely mad, by delaying me in this manner?....come along, boy,’ turning to the guide, ‘lead the way to the Largo Castilio.’

The lad, without moving, looked at Mactalla, as if he required some further directions from him.

The fact was, Mactalla, in their way to the apartment, having dropped something like a hint of the apprehended derangement of his master, owing to his solicitude to have him particularly attended to in his ramble, the lad conceived it requisite to know from him whether or not he should now obey the order he had received.

Mactalla, alarmed by this conduct, lest it should create a suspicion in the mind of Osmond of what he had said, endeavoured, by significant looks, to make him understand he should go.

Ere, however, he could make him comprehend his meaning, Osmond, little brooking such delay, seized him suddenly by the shoulder, and shaking him rather roughly, enquired, in an angry tone, whether he was deaf?

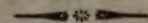
'No, Signor,' replied the lad, in submissive accents, and bowing.

'Then again I say, lead the way directly to the Largo Castilio.'

Still, however, Zerbi hesitated, and continued looking at Mactalla, which Mactalla perceiving, and catching the penetrating eyes of Osmond on him at the moment...

'By the Powers then one would suppose you were!' he cried; 'and what is more, not only deaf but incapable of moving,' giving him at the same moment a more expressive look than he had before done.

The lad no longer at a loss to guess his meaning, again bowed to Osmond, and immediately led the way to the square he was so anxious to visit.



CHAP. XII.

'Love alters not for us his hard decrees,
Not though beneath th' *Thracian* clime we freeze,
Or the mild bliss of temperate skies forego,
And in mid Winter tread *Sithonian* snow;
Love conquers all.'

DAYDEN.

OSMOND followed in silence, and so absorbed in thought, that he neither heard nor saw any thing, and started, as if from a dream, on the lad's suddenly stopping and informing him he was then in the Largo Castilio.

'Indeed!' cried Osmond, looking around him for a few minutes, with a vacant eye; then recovering himself a little, 'You know by whom these houses are occupied, I presume, my friend?'

'Yes, Signor, except a few that are let to English families.'

'English families!' repeated Osmond, with animation. 'Run, my good lad, and enquire at their respective mansions for a gentleman of the name of Raymond.'

'Lord, Signor,' cried Zerbi, hesitating, and rubbing his head, 'won't my knocking at the different doors seem rather queer?'

'No matter,' returned Osmond; 'I'll be at your elbow, to prevent any thing disagreeable resulting to you from your obeying my orders.'

'O, very well, Signor; if you'll take the blame of the thing upon yourself, I am satisfied to do as you wish.'

Accordingly he proceeded to make the enquiry he had been desired, but to no purpose. Mr. Raymond was not the inhabitant of any one of the houses at which he knocked.

As he approached the last one....'Should disappointment await me here too,' cried Osmond mentally....his heart almost died within him at the idea.

Again he was destined to experience it; but he was this time so lost in the surprise, the delight, the tumultuous emotions excited by hearing Lord O'Sibister was the occupier of this mansion, that he scarcely felt it.

To have met with even a common acquaintance in a place like the present, where he neither knew, nor was known by any one, would have been a truly welcome circumstance; no wonder then, that to meet thus unexpectedly a person whom he looked upon as a real friend, scarcely less interested in his welfare than his own family, should be a source of the liveliest pleasure to him.

'Good heavens!' he exclaimed to himself, 'how delightful, how fortunate his being here at such a period! How welcome will his society be to me, after being so long estranged from the society of all I could consider native friends; and how serviceable may his notice prove to me; the Duke D'Amalfi will be convinced by it that his relations have not introduced an improper character to him; and Mr. Raymond, should I be so fortunate as to discover his residence, that I am not other than I have represented myself.'

For some minutes he stood irresolute whether or not he should immediately pay his compliments to his Lordship. At length the agitation in which he found himself, and the idea that a letter might by this time perhaps be arrived for him at the hotel, from Mrs. Raymond, induced him to decide on deferring a visit to him to another opportunity.

The moment he re-entered the hotel, he eagerly en-

whether there was any message or letter for him, his extreme mortification was answered in the negative.

His chagrin, however, did not render him forgetful of the attention due to the Duke D'Amalfi. He wrote a respectful note to his Excellency, to acquaint him of his arrival in Naples, and request him to fix the day which he would choose to see him.

A most gracious answer was returned, in which the Duke, after expressing the pleasure it gave him to hear of his safe arrival, apologized for not being able to see him for a day or two, owing to a national business of great importance, in which he was, just at this time, engaged.

And, from the agitated state of his mind at present, the wish he had to pursue, without interruption, his search after the Raymonds, was infinitely more pressing at this, than if he had been invited to an interview with his Excellency.

Sometimes he was inclined to hope his inquiries after the Raymonds would speedily prove successful; then again, when he reflected on the wary and suspicious man Mr. Raymond appeared to be, he almost despaired of suc-

cess. Had he have flattered himself with a hope of their remaining any length of time in Naples, this was an apprehension he probably would not have yielded to; but as, from his conduct Mr. Raymond appeared to have no intentions of his lady respecting him, he could persuade himself that they would not speedily change quarters.

Mrs. Raymond would ever voluntarily have left him, and in such a manner, he had not the smallest idea. His confidence in her sincerity was too great to permit him to

harbour one of the kind....his opinion of her purity too exalted, to allow him to imagine she had deceived him with his feelings, by inspiring hopes she knew to be false, and must be convinced could not be disappointed without inflicting the severest anguish.

The pain which he felt assured she experienced at being prevented coming to the explanation she had promised, and the unhappiness he felt equally convinced her lovely

ing; and probably he would have visited more, but for his suddenly recollecting he should derive no benefit from meeting Mr. Raymond, except he heard his name mentioned, his features being still utterly unknown to him.

The ensuing morning, agreeable to the resolve of the preceding day, he repaired to pay his respects to his noble and highly-esteemed friend, Lord O'Sinister, but was disappointed of the pleasure of seeing him, by his Lordship having just gone out to ride, nor could the servant say when he would be back; his return being uncertain, Osmond, instead of waiting, begged to leave a note. Accordingly he was shewn into a library, where he wrote a few lines, merely stating the accidental manner in which he had discovered his Lordship's being in Naples, and the anxiety he felt to pay his compliments to him in person.

On his return to the hotel, the restlessness which anxiety and incertitude made him experience, united to his determination of not losing any time in the prosecution of his search after the Raymonds which, if still in Naples, he thought he should be most likely to succeed in, by visiting the different public edifices, caused him to send for the guide of the preceding day.

On his entering his apartment, Osmond demanded whether he could devote the whole of the day to him, as he wished in the course of it to go over Naples, and take a view of all its public buildings.

The lad, without replying, first viewed Osmond with a stare of astonishment, and then turning to Mactalla, regarded him with a similar one.

'Why what the devil is the matter with you?' asked Mactalla, again fearing if he did not interpose the hint he had given him respecting his master might be betrayed. 'If the Signor had desired you to shew him to the infernal regions, you could not look more surprised.'

'And no wonder, I am sure you'll allow,' said Zerbi. 'Yes, I am certain you must confess it was enough to make me stare, to hear the Signor say, he intended going over the city, and viewing all its public buildings in the course of one day, when I inform you, that the monasteries and convents only of both sexes here are one hun-

dred and forty-nine ; besides which, there are thirty four houses for poor boys, girls, and women ; also eleven hospitals, five seminaries for ecclesiastics, four principal churches, thirty-two parish churches, seventy other churches and chapels, and upwards of one hundred and thirty oratories, or chapels of religious fraternities.'

'Blessed St. Benedict ! but there are more than an good of them, I warrant,' said Mactalla, still more convinced, from this circumstance of his master being a little deranged, as he could not for a moment imagine person of his education ignorant on the subject.

Osmond could not forbear blushing at the absence of mind which the inadvertent manner he had just spoke in evinced.

'I merely meant, my good lad,' said he, again addressing Zerbi, 'that I wished to see the most celebrated parts of the city, and the buildings generally first visited by strangers.'

'O, now I understand you, Signor,' returned Zerbi no longer hesitating to lead the way.

The cathedral dedicated to St. Januarius, and in which the head and blood of that Saint, the latter in two crystal vials, are kept, was the first place Osmond was taken to and, notwithstanding the abstracted state of his mind, he viewed it with some attention, and altogether considered it a very fine old structure.

The Jesuits' church too, and which he next visited decorated as it was in every part with the most costly ornaments, also laid claim to his admiration ; nor did that of the holy Apostles, esteemed the richest in painting and other embellishments, excite a less lively sensation.

The celebrated convent too of St. Clare, supposed to be the largest in the world, containing no fewer than one hundred and fifty nuns, exclusive of servants of all denominations, he considered well worthy of regard, and as he viewed its magnificent church, could not forbear wishing to have had a peep into its interior.

But what particularly pleased him was the sublime views most of the religious edifices commanded....views with the vast extent and amazing grandeur of which the magnificence of those buildings perfectly accorded.

Amongst other places, as in his opinion better worth seeing than any other, Zerbi took Osmond to the Grotto del Cane. Here, however, Osmond staid but a few minutes: the cruel experiments practised on the most faithful of the brute creation, drove him with horror and disgust from the spot, astonished how any person could allow their curiosity to be gratified at the expence of their humanity.

In their way back to the hotel, delightful music from an open church invited him to enter; he found it crowded, and enquiring the cause, learned it was the festival of the Saint to whom it was dedicated.

The sacerdotal splendour here exhibited to his view was truly dazzling to his senses; his attention, however, was quickly diverted from this by the noise and confusion, occasioned by the number of people who were perpetually crowding in and crowding out.

More confused than gratified by the scene, Osmond soon endeavoured to make his escape; but in vain he strove to regain the entrance. At length he succeeded in getting to a side aisle, where again he began to breathe freely. He proceeded down this till his progress was impeded by a bar, which raising, he found himself, on advancing a few steps farther, in an inclosure, containing a small altar, before which he was somewhat startled, on perceiving a gentleman extended, apparently in a deep swoon, and which, from his hand being pressed against his left side Osmond concluded to be owing to some hurt he had received there.

‘Poor gentleman,’ said he, stopping, and turning towards Zerbi, who, notwithstanding the crowd and bustle they had just been in, had contrived to keep close to him, ‘what a melancholy situation! I wish we could find some door here that we might carry him out.’

‘Carry him out!’ repeated Zerbi, with a stare of astonishment.

‘Yes,’ replied Osmond, but without attending to this look; ‘the air would be of use to him.’

‘Of use to him, Signor!’ again repeated Zerbi, and staring if possible still more strangely at him.

‘Doubtless,’ returned Osmond, and stepping forward he passed his arm under his neck, for the purpose of rendering him some assistance. Scarcely had he done so, however, when he felt himself almost dragged to the ground, by the violent pull Zerbi gave to the skirt of his coat, and who at the same moment exclaimed....

‘Signor, Signor, are you really mad!’ (of his being so indeed he had now no longer a doubt) ‘or do you mean to commit sacrilege by robbing the dead?’

Osmond, in unutterable astonishment, stared first at Zerbi and then at the body before him. Ere he recovered sufficiently from this to give utterance to the curiosity so strange a circumstance excited, a monk approached, and being informed by Zerbi of what had just passed immediately conceived the mistake Osmond had made in his appearance announcing him a foreigner, and in consequence explained to him, that it was customary in Naples to bring every person to church in full dress, soon after their death, for the purpose of having the service read over them, which ceremony being performed, the corpse was carried home, and having no further occasion for its fine clothes, was then stripped to the shirt and buried privately.

Osmond, though through politeness he forbore to say so, could not help thinking it ludicrous in the extreme dressing out the dead in such a manner; their general costume being embroidered clothes, laced hat, long ruffles, hair finely powdered, a blooming nosegay in one hand, and the other pressed in a graceful manner against the side; but by no means disapproved of the custom that he also understood prevailed here of carrying the uncovered to the grave, (since, as an elegant and animated writer has observed) he conceived it a custom calculated to annihilate the puerile dread of corpses, and at the same time present an instructive and striking image of the vanity of human life.

He thanked the monk for his politeness, and was still further indebted to him, by being let out by him at a private door.

The pleasure which this his first tour through Naples

would have afforded him, would have been great, but for his having sought in vain throughout it for those he was so anxious to discover. With encreased heaviness of heart he returned to the hotel, almost convinced he should see them no more. He could alone keep himself from absolute despair, by determining to write to the Count, to implore him to endeavour to obtain from his aunt the address of Mr. Raymond, with which he had no doubt of her being acquainted.

At the door of the hotel he found Mactalla, apparently watching for his return, and to his surprise with a sorrowful countenance.

‘What’s the matter?’ he hastily, and in some agitation inquired, on gaining his apartment; ‘has any thing unpleasant occurred during my absence, Mactalla?....for you seem quite cast down.’

‘By the Powers and a good right I have to be so,’ said Mactalla, ‘for we are going to lose Felisco.’

‘Yes, Signor,’ said Felisco, who had also followed his steps, and now with a low bow advanced into the room; ‘and moreover, I am on the point of being rendered the happiest of men.’

‘Indeed!’ cried Osmond, ‘then I assure you, my good friend, I rejoice to hear so, for the obligations you have laid me under have rendered me highly interested about you.’

‘I thank you, Signor, for your goodness,’ said Felisco, with another bow; ‘and now permit me to say, that if you have any curiosity to learn the circumstances which occasioned my joining the villains we so fortunately escaped from, I shall be happy to gratify you.’

‘If agreeable to you to relate them, I shall be happy to listen to you.’

‘Love, Signor,’ (began Felisco) ‘love was the occasion of my imprudence. A young Paysanne, the daughter of a farmer, in whose service I engaged, in consequence of being obliged to forsake the neighbourhood of my native village, soon made a conquest of my silly heart; but as I imagined her father would never consent to her bestowing herself on such a poor wight as I was, I did all in my power to smother the passion with which she had

inspired me, and for that purpose strove, as much as possible, to shun her, but to no purpose; wherever I went, she was always, like my shadow, close at my heels; if I went to the field to sow grain, Bona was sure to be there before me; if I went to examine the fences, I was sure to meet with Bona; when I went to reap the harvest, Bona would start out upon me, like a bird from the midst of the standing corn; and never did I visit the market town, without finding her there, dressed out in her holiday finery, and looking as beautiful as an angel. Nay, I assure you, Signor,' observing Osmond smile at these words, 'I don't exaggerate in saying so, which I imagine you'll allow, when I inform you, she has a fine round fat face, as red as a full-blown rose, and about the size of a middling cheese, and that her person is stout in proportion; then she is as blithe as a bird, and as strong as a young horse; can continue dancing longer than a person bitten by the tarantula, and manage a load many men would complain of. Often and often did she lighten my labour, by carrying large sacks of corn to the granary for me.'

'What a happy man,' interrupted Osmond, 'to be able to look forward to having such a divinity in your arms! upon my word, Mr. Felisco, you are an enviable fellow.'

'Ay, so I should have said too,' cried Mactalla, 'had he said less of Miss Bona's fat face.'

'Well, every one to his taste,' said Felisco, but with rather an air of chagrin; 'if every one had the same, why what would there be but continual squabbles in the world.'

'Justly observed, indeed,' cried Osmond; 'and so now, if you please, my good friend, go on with your story.'

'Well, Signor, one day, it had like to have proved a fatal day to me, I went to market with some corn, and there, as usual I found her before me, flaunting in new ribbons, as gay and as proud as a horse on the Corso, looking altogether so charming indeed, that I could not forbear, contrary to my usual custom, ogling her a little; for persuaded her father would never consent to our

the Strada di Toledo, I found myself suddenly clasped in the arms of a young man, the same I almost instantly perceived whom I thought I had killed. I leave you to judge, Signor, what my astonishment at the moment must have been; as also my joy, particularly when informed by him that my sweet Bona had also escaped death, and was perfectly recovered, and loved me as well, if not better, for the proof, though so cruel a one, I had given of my passion for her. He moreover told me that the scene which so worked upon my feelings in the market-place, was entirely a contrivance of her's, to discover whether I really loved her or not, which she was doubtful of, owing to the reserve with which I treated her; and that her father finding nothing else would render her happy, and pleased besides with my conduct whilst in his servise, had consented to our being united, if we ever met again. So to-morrow I propose setting out for their village, and as I said at the commencement of my story, am thus on the point of becoming the happiest of men; for though so imprudent as to associate for a time with a band of villains, yet as they never could prevail on me to perpetrate any heinous offence, I flatter myself 'tis a circumstance which will not make against me with the old farmer, especially when the motives that led to it are taken into consideration.

‘My own prospects have not rendered me unmindful of what I owe to the community; I have already lodged information against the banditti, so that in a short time I trust the public will be freed from their depredations.’

He then concluded, by informing Osmond that as the village he was going to was in the road to Acerenza, he would, if he pleased, take the French boy along with him, who it was settled was to return thither.

Osmond gladly embraced such an opportunity to send him back, and availed himself of the same to write to the Count.

He warmly congratulated Felisco on the happy termination of his troubles, and pressed a sum of money on him, as a proof of the sincerity of his gratitude for the services he had received from him.....Not being able,

however, to prevail on him, to accept this, he had Zerbi again summoned, and was conducted by him to a shop, where he purchased a handsome piece of silk for a wedding gown for the fair Bona, and a plain but neat suit of clothes for her husband elect, presents which he could not decline.

Evening was approaching, and Osmond was on the point of going out upon another ramble, when a note was presented to him from Lord O'Sinister, requesting to see him immediately.

That he did not delay obeying the summons of his noble friend, may readily be believed. He repaired to him with a determination of reposing unlimited confidence in him respecting the Raymonds, conceiving his assistance might do much towards enabling him to discover them.

He found him in a magnificent drawing-room, but to his great surprise....a surprise not to be wondered at, considering what he had heard in the morning, reclined upon a couch, in a loose dress, and with his legs rolled up in flannel.

After mutual interrogations had taken place, and his Lordship had informed Osmond, whom he received with every demonstration of pleasure, that ill health was the cause of his present visit to Naples, but in which he was unaccompanied by his family, and gladdened his heart by telling him that he had heard from Heathwood but a few days previous to his departure from England, and that all were then well there, he proceeded to enquire why he did not wait too see him in the morning, adding, he knew nothing of his having called till after dinner, or he should certainly have sent to request his company to it.

Osmond unhesitatingly informed him.

'Out riding!' repeated his Lordship, angrily 'good heavens, how stupid of any of my people to say such a thing! I was in bed at the time you called, and assure you I shall consider myself well off, if able to bear even the motion of a carriage in the course of a month, so severely have I suffered by this attack of the gout.'

Then extending his hand to a bell that hung near the arm of the couch, he rang it violently.

‘Who was it answered Mr. Munro?’ in a tone of high displeasure, he demanded of the servant who obeyed his summons.

‘I don’t know who your Lordship means,’ replied the servant.

‘I mean the gentleman who left the note which I received at dinner.’

‘O, the gentleman who called while your Lordship was out riding,’ as if suddenly recollecting the circumstance. ‘It was I, my Lord.’

‘You infernal blockhead!’ cried his Lordship, raising himself from his recumbent posture, fury sparkling in his eyes, ‘what do you mean by saying I was out when you know I was in bed at the time Mr. Munro called, and that I have not been able to get into a coach much less on horseback, since my arrival at Naples.... You know there is no one in this house rides out at present but Jenkins.’

‘True, true, my Lord, stammered out the man, in an affrighted tone, and great confusion, ‘but I....I.....’

‘None of your stupid explanations, Sir,’ vociferated his Lordship. ‘I have nothing more to say to you than this....if you do not, of your own accord, know what answer to give my friends, enquire, for I am not to run the risk of having them offended through the blunders of my people. Retire, and remember I shall not give you a second admonition on the subject.’

As soon as he had withdrawn, and his Lordship, with his wonted politeness, had apologized to Osmond for the vent he had given to his passion before him, he desired to know to what circumstance his being in Naples was owing, having left England on so different a destination, adding, in the whole course of his life he had never been so surprised as by finding him here.

Osmond as briefly as possible narrated all that had befallen him since his embarkation from England.

His Lordship listened with the most profound attention to his narrative, and also, to judge from his sudden starts, and the various changes his countenance underwent, with the most lively emotion.

Instead, however, of expressing the sympathy which

from these circumstances Osmond was led to believe it had excited in his mind, it was scarcely concluded, ere he burst into an immoderate and apparently uncontrollable fit of laughter, to the unutterable confusion as well as surprise of Osmond, who saw nothing in what he had been relating calculated to create mirth.

‘My dear young friend,’ said the wily Peer, as soon as he had a little recovered himself, perceiving, by the flushing cheek, and kindling eye of Osmond, the resentment his unseasonable and apparently uncontrollable mirth had excited.... ‘I ask ten thousand pardons for the latitude I have given to my feelings in the present instance; but upon my honour, if I was to have died for it, I could not help laughing at your story, it so strongly reminded me of Don Quixote’s, on his coming out of the Cave of Montesinos; shipwrecks, caverns, old castles, banditti, and distressed damsels, after encountering all these, you may well publish your travels, by the title of *The Wonderful Adventures of Osmond Munro*. Those of the Abyssinian Traveller, and the great Munchausen himself, will appear as nothing hereafter, should you favour the public with your’s.’

‘Why surely, my Lord,’ cried Osmond, colouring still more violently, and in a voice trembling through excess of agitation, ‘you.....’

‘Cannot doubt your veracity,’ interrupting him with a smiling aspect; ‘no, my dear lad, I know you too well to believe you capable of romancing; besides, even though I was not as perfectly acquainted with you as I am, still would I not discredit what you have told me, since I am well aware more events happen in this life than are dreamt of in our philosophy. But be assured, notwithstanding what has just passed, I am infinitely more pained than amused by your narrative....pained to think that with your excellent understanding, you should have suffered yourself to be imposed upon by a set of artful adventurers.’

‘Adventurers, my Lord!’ echoed Osmond with a look which seemed to say he did not perfectly understand him.

‘Yes,’ returned his Lordship, with the utmost coolness,

‘ I don’t pretend to say your Count Placentia is one, but then he is no better than a ridiculous fool, who has inspired you with hopes of the most futile, the most chimerical nature ; but I again assert, your Raymonds are People of real consequence don’t so easily fall into the hands of banditti as they led you to imagine. In word, I have not a doubt on my mind of their being very intimately acquainted with the honourable gentlemen from whom you were suffered to escape....suffered, I say for take my word your movements are better known than you were aware of ; or of their having associated with you, under the hope of being introduced here in such manner as should prevent any suspicion of what they were in reality being entertained ; neither of their having gone off with the silence and secrecy they did, owing to their finding at length, through your own confession, for you say you were very candid with them, that this was the hope which could not be realized through your means, in consequence of your being a stranger here.’

‘ Good heavens, my Lord !’ exclaimed Osmond, with astonishment, ‘ what a supposition, after telling you of our being pursued by the banditti, of their having been at Acerenza.....’

‘ You wonder I could entertain such a one. Truly me, my dear Osmond, your being pursued by the banditti was a mere stratagem, to prevent your suspecting them to be other than they represented themselves, consciousness of guilt frequently inducing people to have recourse to even superfluous measures to guard against detection ; and as to their having been at Acerenza, did you ever see them at the Castle of Acerenza or hear aught of them there, but from a domestic, doubtless in league with them, to impose upon you and others. In short, I am so thoroughly persuaded of their being what I have styled them, that not all your eloquence will be able to make me forego this opinion ; neither shall I be able to divest myself of uneasiness on your account except you promise to think no more of them....solemn promise, should chance again throw them in your way to avoid them as you would plague, pestilence, and famine.’

‘Impossible, my Lord,’ said Osmond, with warmth; ‘never will I make a promise I do not mean to fulfil. In the place of flying, ’tis my fixed determination to persevere in seeking them, wherever I think there is the least likelihood of meeting with them....my fixed determination never to relinquish the sentiments with which they have inspired me, except convinced, by the testimony of my own senses, they are not merited. When you reflect my Lord,’ endeavouring to speak with more calmness, ‘on the danger the banditti must have been conscious they should incur by letting me effect my escape, I think you must be inclined to allow their conniving at it a very improbable circumstance, and consequently that your present suspicions are erroneous.’

‘By no means,’ replied his Lordship, ‘for I am persuaded the banditti are not confined to one haunt. In a word, instead of being induced by reflection to give up what you are pleased to style my erroneous suspicions, I am the more confirmed in them by it.’

‘Then we had better drop the subject, my Lord,’ said Osmond, again with warmth, ‘since one on which there is a difference of opinion cannot be dismissed too soon.’

‘Assuredly,’ assented his Lordship, ‘except, as in the present case, it be essential to the welfare of any particular person to have it further discussed. My dear Osmond,’ he continued, in one of his most insidious tones, and with a corresponding look, laying his hand too on his arm as he spoke, and gently pressing it, ‘you look displeased, you look offended; but surely, my dear fellow, you should not be angry with a man for speaking his real sentiments, nor piqued with him for giving advice, when conscious, as I flatter myself in the present instance you must be, that his motive for doing so is friendship. If I had not the sincerest, the most heartfelt regard for you, believe me I never would have intruded mine on you, for I am by no means of a disposition to trouble myself with what does not immediately concern me.

‘Friendship,’ added he, after a short pause, ‘has some painful duties to fulfil; amongst these,’ withdrawing his

hand, with something like a sigh from the arm of Osmond, as he spoke, 'none I now perceive is more distressing than that of offering advice.'

'Oh, my Lord,' cried Osmond, completely imposed upon in this instance, as he had been in many others, by the plausibility of the Peer, and ashamed of the petulance he now conceived he had betrayed, 'do not wrong me so much as to imagine I can feel otherwise than grateful for your advice, appreciating, as I do, the motive from which it springs....I only lament, that in this instance you should deem it necessary; but ere a short period elapses, I will hope that I shall have the power of convincing your Lordship that the opinion which has occasioned it is unfounded, by having an opportunity of introducing you to the acquaintance of Mrs. Raymond and her lovely daughter. Oh, my Lord, had you seen, had you conversed with them as I have done, your injurious surmises respecting them would.....'

'Have been exactly what they now are,' returned his Lordship, with the utmost coolness, 'that is, if I had met with them in the way you did, and had been treated by them in the manner you were; for believe me, my dear Osmond, something more than a silvery voice, witching looks, or liberal sentiments, are requisite to prevent suspicious circumstances from creating doubt and distrust in the mind of a man who has mixed much in life, and had experimental knowledge of the various deceptions daily, hourly practised in it.....The Camilla of Le Sage, and the Milwood of Lillo, are, take my word for it, much more common characters, than a person unhacknied in the ways of the world may be inclined to imagine. The fair ladies in question are, or I am egregiously mistaken, which he who draws his inferences from actions seldom is, exactly of their description. Had you had a rich casket of jewels, or a wealthy uncle in this quarter, they would not I dare say, have agonized your feelings by taking themselves off in the manner they did.'

'Gracious heaven!' exclaimed Osmond, starting up in agitation which shook his frame, and again flushed his cheek with crimson, 'what a horrible assertion!....let us

wave this subject, my Lord,' he added, after a transient pause, endeavouring to collect himself, and returning to the couch, from which unconsciously he had started.

'With all my heart,' said his Lordship, nodding; 'and yet, my dear lad,' motioning Osmond to resume his seat, 'I am apprehensive the one I am about introducing will not prove more agreeable.'

'Tis impossible it can prove less so, my Lord,' returned Osmond, calmly, and somewhat coolly; for though persuaded Lord O'Sinister had spoken as he had done from the best motives, yet could he not help feeling both indignant and resentful, at hearing those, so dear to his regard, so truly believed by him to be already deserving of being

'Ensky'd and sainted,'

traded in such a manner.

'Well then,' proceeded his Lordship, 'not to keep you in suspense, know that I should consider myself unworthy of the appellation of your friend....the friend of your family, if I delayed apprizing you of the destruction that to a certainty awaits you if you continue in Naples. Nay, hear me out without interruption,' observing Osmond again all emotion, and on the point of speaking; 'your doing so will not deprive you of the power of still acting as you please.'

Osmond bowed respectfully, and the subtle Peer thus went on....

'The hopes which you indulge respecting the Duke D'Amalfi, are, trust me, like an edifice raised on sand, without a foundation. I know him well, for this has not been my first visit to Naples, and know him to be, in every sense of the word, a complete courtier....a man who will never think of patronizing a person who has not, in some way or other, the power of rendering him a service. He is not, I assure you, by any means, one of those characters that find a pleasure in sheltering modest merit, and drawing it from obscurity. To use the words of a dramatic writer....' If you can do him here, he will do you there,' but not else. I leave you, therefore, to judge whether without even that claim upon his protec-

tion, which being a fellow-subject would give you have the least chance of succeeding with him.'

'O, my Lord,' cried Osmond, in an accent proved it was with difficulty he had heard his Lord thus far, 'I cannot believe that the Count Placent Marchesa Morati, would expose me to such a humiliating disappointment as your Lordship intimates likely, or rather certain of experiencing from the D'Amalfi. Neither can I believe that his Excellency would, voluntarily, incur the resentment of relations so truly, as well as deservedly, esteems, by making promise to them he never meant to fulfil. He put his word to them to provide for me, and never will relinquish the hopes his assurance to do so has in till I have unquestionable proofs of their being deceivers.'

'Ere you obtain these, it may be too late for said his Lordship, in an impressive tone, 'to remove evils which waiting for their realization can scarce of drawing on you.....The Duke D'Amalfi will not lightly terminate your suspense, lest if he did, his insincerity respecting you should be suspected; and when he trusts me he will not want a pretext for disappointing expectations, such as shall prevent his being involved in your account with the Acerenza family; for men, him, versed in the arts of courts, are never at a loss to extricate themselves from any difficulty. If you have as much of the deceptions of life as I do, believe my dear Osmond, you would not be so incredulous in the present instance as you are.'

'May I ever continue a stranger to what is calculated to introduce suspicion and distrust into the mind of Osmond, with warmth and energy; 'for I would rather sometimes be deceived, than live in perpetual apprehensions of being so; since if confidence between men be destroyed, there can be no happiness in society.'

'Ah, this is quite the enthusiastic rant of a romantic mind,' cried his Lordship, with a smile and a shake of the head. 'I take my word for it, my young friend, as you grow older in life, experience will convince you that it is both convenient and serviceable to have a thorough knowledge of the world.'

of its manifold artifices. But to return to the point from which we have somewhat strayed....if you have the least regard for your welfare, the interest of your family, your present peace, your future happiness, quit, I conjure you, and that without delay, this dangerous region of luxury.....The lucrative and comfortable situation in Jamaica, which I offered to you, is still open for your acceptance. Take my advice,' continued his Lordship, with encreasing vehemence, convinced, by perceiving no change in the countenance of Osmond, that Delacour had not enlightened him with regard to his character, and that he might therefore venture to press the matter, 'and do not refuse it again.'

'Believe me, my Lord,' returned Osmond, 'I feel the most lively gratitude for the anxiety you manifest for my welfare, but in the present instance I must decline availing myself of it; for as I have not a doubt of the patronage of the Duke D'Amalfi, my mind is already made up as to my future plans.'

'If you have made it up to remaining here,' said his Lordship, in no very complacent accent, 'you have made it up to acting the part of a fool, as you will yet find to your cost, should you persist in your present resolution. Again I tell you, that to hope for any thing from that proud deceitful courtier, is to hope for what will never happen.'

'Pardon me, my Lord, for saying I cannot in this instance agree in opinion with you.'

'Then you will not go to Jamaica?' demanded his Lordship, sitting upright on the couch, and fastening his keenly penetrating and kindling eyes upon the countenance of Osmond.

Osmond bowed.

'Very well, Sir....very well,' but in a voice which proclaimed him dreadfully agitated, 'I see plainly how it is; yes, 'tis evident you have imposed a fabricated tale on me; that in some way or other you have involved yourself with these vile women, of whom you have been speaking, and that 'tis on their account you scorn my advice. Yes, I am convinced 'tis not your expectations from the Duke D'Amalfi, but your entanglement with

them, that induces you to determine on remaining here. Nay,' added he, perceiving the lips of Osmond set in a frown, 'nothing you can say can persuade me to the contrary, no, by heaven!' raising his voice, 'nothing but your allowing my advice can or shall make me think you are content!'

'Then I must still appear guilty in your Lordship's eyes,' said Osmond, with forced calmness, and a bowing.

CHAP. XIII.

'Oh, wretched man! whose too, too busy thoughts,
Ride swifter than the galloping heavens round,
With an eternal hurry of the soul:
Nay there's a time when e'en the rolling year
Seems to stand still; dead calms are in the ocean,
When not a breath disturbs the drowsy waves;
But man the very monster of the world,
Is ne'er at rest....the soul for ever wakes.'

'WHAT!' demanded his Lordship, in a more furious tone, 'are you already so hardened in your guilt, as to be indifferent to the good opinion of a person you have so many reasons to esteem!....the good opinion of him who has been not only your patron, but the protector of your family!....whose hand preserved your father from sinking....whose purse gave you the means of acquiring the advantages you possess!'

'I am indifferent to the good opinion of no man, my Lord,' returned Osmond, with manly firmness; 'but to the consciousness of deserving it, do I value a noble and honourable reputation; but to avoid one painful imputation I cannot think of incurring others still more painful. I am conscious of the obligations which your Lordship has conferred upon me and my family, be assured it was not needful to remind me of them, since they lie registered here, on his hand upon his, at the moment, proudly-swelling his heart; but great as they are, they cannot render me forgetful of those I owe to others. Was I quietly to acquiesce in the opinion you have formed of the noble fi-

I have been so fortunate as to acquire in this country, I should conceive myself a monster of ingratitude.'

'A truce with your sentimental speeches, Sir,' said his Lordship; 'here they cannot answer the purpose for which they are framed, namely, that of deceiving; and tell me, I again demand, are you positively determined on not going to Jamacia?'

Again a bow was the only reply he received from Osmond.

'Have done with your grimaces, Sir,' said he, still more imperiously; 'coxcomical airs neither suit your situation in life, nor profession.'

'Then, since your Lordship wishes me to speak out,' returned Osmond, still endeavouring to curb the feelings that mantled his face with crimson, 'I am positively determined not to go thither.'

'Then I am equally determined you shall,' rejoined his Lordship. 'Yes, by heaven! you either follow my advice in this instance, or forfeit my friendship for ever. Never will I continue it to a person who wilfully courts destruction, as will be the case should you persist in remaining here. The interest I have taken in your family affairs, the part I have had in your education, authorizes me to interfere in your conduct; prepare, therefore, without further hesitation, for your departure hence.'

'Excuse me, my Lord,' said Osmond; 'I cannot think of preparing for what I do not intend should take place.'

'But I say, Sir,' striking the arm of the couch with violence, 'I say, Sir, there is a likelihood of your departure hence taking place; ways are to be found of overcoming obstinacy.'

'With your permission, my Lord,' cried Osmond, 'I will now retire; for I see my protracting my visit can answer no other end, than that of adding to the agitation it pains me to see you in, in your present state of health.'

'No, Sir, you shall not retire till you assent to my proposal.'

'O, my Lord,' cried Osmond, somewhat indignantly,

‘surely you cannot suppose me so extremely variable in my disposition.’

‘Then I must tell you, Sir,’ said his Lordship, with a countenance distorted with fury, ‘you are an ungrateful young villain !....a hypocrite !....an impostor !....a disgrace to the profession you have embraced !....a reproach to me for having thrown away my kindness.’

‘My Lord,’ said Osmond proudly, ‘my heart acquits me of having merited such language.’

‘Then, by Heaven ! when your conduct to me is explained, which, depend upon it, it shall, ’tis all that will acquit you. Not merit it !’ he exclaimed, with, if possible greater fury ; ‘there is nothing vile which you do not merit from me,’ starting from the couch, on which he had hitherto been reclining, with the agility of an opera dancer, and traversing the room with quick and disordered steps, to the utter amazement of Osmond, who, from the state in which he described himself, as well as his appearance, had not an idea of his being able to move without assistance, ‘nothing degrading,’ he proceeded, as if transported out of himself by passion, ‘which you do not merit at my hands, for the injury you have done me.’

‘Injury, my Lord !’ cried Osmond.

‘Yes, Sir, the irreparable injury you have done me, by robbing me.’

‘Robbing you, my Lord !’ cried Osmond, again echoing his words. ‘Of what, my Lord ?’ he demanded, in the peremptory and steady voice of courage and conscious innocence.

‘Of what ?’ repeated the Peer ; ‘why of....of....my.... my tranquillity !’ he added, as if suddenly recollecting himself, and in a tone, and with a smile of the most insidious expression.

‘Then I will now take my leave, my Lord,’ moving towards the door, ‘in order to afford your Lordship a speedy opportunity of recovering what I have been so unfortunate as to deprive you of.’

‘Stop, Sir !’ said his Lordship, stamping ; the flannels in which his legs were enveloped, dropped, at the moment,

about his heels, and to the, if possible, encreasing astonishment of Osmond, discovered them cased up in boots.

The looks of Osmond first made him sensible of what had happened. For an instant he appeared confused ; then, as if to prove the correctness of what he had said, relative to a person brought up in the great world never being at a loss to relieve themselves from an embarrassment, he asserted, as with evidently feigned difficulty he returned to the couch, that he had been ordered by his physicians to wear boots, as a means of keeping down the swelling in his legs, and that he had not a doubt but that the exertions into which he had been hurried by the passion his (Osmond's) obstinacy, had thrown him into, would be attended with injurious consequences to him.

Osmond, with an involuntary smile of scornful incredulity, for that his Lordship was, at the present period, no more an invalid than himself, he was now thoroughly convinced, from what had just passed, though why, or wherefore he should feign indisposition to him, was utterly above his comprehension, instead of appearing to notice this observation, drew still nearer to the door, but was again commanded to stop by his Lordship.

'Stop, Sir,' said he again ; 'I cannot permit you to withdraw, till I have told you, that less of the coxcomb in your appearance would suit better with your profession and prospects in life.

'The coxcomb, my Lord !' cried Osmond, returning his malicious glance with an involuntary indignant and enquiring one.

'Yes, Sir, the coxcomb ; else you would not wear that glittering gewgaw on your finger,' glancing at the right hand of Osmond, on which sparkled the valued gift of Mrs. Raymond.

'I have already told you, my Lord, how I came by this ring ; as a pledge of friendship, I conceive myself fully warranted to wear it.'

'Doubtless,' rejoined his Lordship, 'as you do, to do whatever else you like.....Will you have the goodness, Sir, to favour me with a more particular view of that ring ?'

cel the pecuniary obligations he and his family were under to his Lordship.

‘Good heavens!’ he mentally exclaimed, ‘to what sudden revolutions are we liable in this life!....our tastes, our feelings, our sentiments, as well as our situations! But a few hours ago, and how exalted was my opinion of Lord O’Sinister! now how ignoble do I think him! mean, tyrannical, dissimulative, presuming upon the name of benefactor, to dictate and govern!’

That it was entirely out of malice his Lordship had kept back his ring from him, he persuaded himself; he could not, however, bring himself to believe that he meant to retain it; but this belief did not prevent him from determining to send for it the ensuing morning, should he not have received it before then.

The expression of his countenance, and the agitation of his manner, on his return to the hotel, did not by any means, tend to dissipate the idea with which his valet was at present impressed concerning him; for as he had learned from the servant who brought the note from Lord O’Sinister to Osmond, that his Lordship was a particular friend of his master, he could not possibly imagine that any thing disagreeable had occurred in the interview between them, and of consequence attributed the wildness and disorder of Osmond’s looks to mental derangement.

This being the last night he and Felisco had to pass together, they sat up to a late hour. Ere he went to bed, Mactalla thought it but prudent to take a peep at his master, so great was the perturbation of spirits under which he had retired to repose. Accordingly he softly entered his chamber, and setting down his light near the entrance, advanced with cautious steps to the bed, and gently parting the side-curtains, had the satisfaction of finding him in a sound sleep.

‘Ha, ha!’ he cried to himself, on perceiving this, ‘blessed St. Benedict has heard my prayers. This good rest will do wonders; ’twill restore him to his right senses; blessings on his heart and handsome face, what a pity that he should lose them for a woman!’ for owing to some hints received from Felisco, who had had greater

opportunities than he of observing Miss Raymond and Osmond, he no longer ascribed the supposed malady of his master solely to fatigue. Then withdrawing his head, he was on the point of closing the curtains, when Osmond, under the influence of a dream, which represented Lord O'Sinister in the act of giving orders to some ruffians to seize and force him on board a vessel bound to Jamaica, started up, and catching him by the collar, exclaimed....'No villain, no, you shall not overcome me!'

Mactalla, supposing the fit now strong upon him, exerted all his strength to disengage himself from his grasp, but in vain; finding which, he roared out for help, and soon succeeded in drawing a number of people to the room. The tumult they occasioned quickly brought Osmond to himself, and, utterly abashed, he shrunk beneath the bed-clothes; while Mactalla, half-beside himself with terror and grief answered their interrogations as to the cause of his outcries, by exclaiming....'He is mad !...he is mad !'

Osmond, though almost provoked beyond forbearance by this assertion, aware, as he was, of the irreparable injury it was calculated to do him, was yet too apprehensive that to enter into any argument on the subject at present would only be to confirm it, not to restrain his feelings, and content himself with merely requesting to be left again to his repose, which a disagreeable dream, he added, had alone interrupted.

This request, after some hesitation, and a minute examination of his chamber, to see there was nothing in it with which he could injure himself, was at length complied with: sleep, however visited him no more that night.

The first thing he did, on rising the next morning, was to summon his valet to his presence.

Alarmed by the recollection of what he had said concerning him the preceding night, Mactalla appeared before him with downcast eyes and an embarrassed air..... Eric Osmond entered into any remonstrance with him on the mischief such a report as he had set afloat respecting him was calculated to do, he demanded his grounds for it; and on being informed, could not avoid acknowledg-

ing to himself, that the wildness and abstraction of his manner, since his arrival at Naples, was quite sufficient to induce a belief of his being a little deranged. For this he now accounted, in such a manner as dissipated every idea of its being owing to aught but uneasiness of mind, and succeeded in convincing Mactalla, that...

‘ His pulse, as his, did temperate keep time,
And make as healthful music.’

The morning having nearly elapsed without any message from Lord O’Sinister, as Osmond fully expected, he, at length, wrote the following note to his Lordship, and dispatched it by Mactalla :....

To the Right Honourable Lord Viscount O’Sinister.

‘ MY LORD,

‘ My extreme anxiety to recover the valued gift of friendship which I left in your possession last night, must plead my apology for again intruding upon your Lordship ; should it, by any accident have been mislaid, I must entreat your Lordship to have the goodness to direct a search for it.

‘ I have the honour to be,

‘ My Lord,

‘ Your Lordship’s obedient servant,

‘ OSMOND MUNRO.’

To this laconic billet Mactalla brought back an equally laconic one in reply, penned by the confidant and confederate of his Lordship, Mr. Jenkins. It ran thus :....

‘ MR. MUNRO,

‘ My Lord desires me to say, he is utterly amazed at your persisting in the insolent assertion you made last night. He bids me further tell you, that should you have the temerity to repeat it, he will,

without further hesitation, have recourse to legal measures to silence you on it.

‘I am, Sir,
Your’s,
J. JENKINS.’

While this note was penning, Mactalla was conversing with the servant who had been the bearer of his Lordship’s first one to Osmond, and who, by some means or other, having contrived to overhear the conversation that took place between them in their recent interview, now repeated the same to Mactalla, to his utter rage and amazement, insomuch that it was with difficulty he was prevented making his way to his Lordship, for the purpose of reproaching him for his ungenerous conduct towards his master, and enforcing the restoration of the ring.

Osmond was so irritated by the perusal of Mr. Jenkin’s insolent production, as to snatch up his hat, with an intention of directly hastening to Lord O’Sinister’s, but on the threshold of the door reflection interposed to arrest his steps ; and the additional mortifications which the consideration of a minute sufficed to convince him he should draw upon himself by seeking another interview with the Peer, induced him to abandon the idea altogether.

But never had he found a conquest over himself so difficult as in the present instance, so insulted, so aggrieved did he consider himself.

As soon as reason had regained her empire over him, pride stimulated him to make such exertions as should keep from the knowledge of his servant, of whose knowing aught of what had recently occurred he had no idea, the feelings then passing in his mind ; and still further was he prompted to endeavour to regain an appearance of composure, by the momentary expectation he was now in of being summoned to the Duke D’Amalfi. Instead, however, of this being the case, he received another note from his Excellency, apologizing for being under the necessity of again putting off seeing him for a

few days, owing to his being obliged to wait upon the king, then at Casserta ; but entreating him, in the interim, if needing any immediate service at his hands, not to be backward acknowledging the same.

Osmond returned a polite and grateful answer to this billet, in which, after thanking his Excellency for his condescending goodness, he assured him, that emboldened by it, he should have had no hesitation in availing himself of it, had he any occasion.

Osmond spent part of this evening in again rambling about the city, and visiting some of the public rooms, which in Naples are reckoned peculiarly agreeable, answering the same purposes as the English coffee-houses, with this difference, that they have a double advantage with regard to society ; ladies of the first fashion, as well as gentlemen, resorting to them, and passing their time in agreeable conversation.

Three days passed without any occurrence worth relating, during which Osmond was in momentary expectation of again hearing from the Duke. On the morning of the fourth the following letter was delivered to him :....

To Mr. Munro.

‘ SIR,

‘ Notwithstanding the resentment your conduct has inspired me with, the friendship I feel for your father actuates me to make another effort to save you from destruction, by candidly informing you, a storm, you little dream of, is ready to burst on you, should you persist in your resolution of continuing here ; but that this will be the case, I cannot believe....no, ere this, I both hope and imagine reflection, which I know often achieves what persuasion cannot, has made you sensible of the error you have committed in opposing my wishes....an error, however, which I shall forgive, should I find you repentant.

‘ Your destiny is placed, I may say, in your own hands ; should it, therefore, prove unfortunate, you will have no one to blame but yourself.

‘ I shall expect an immediate answer ; for your own sake I trust it may be such a one as shall restore you to the friendship of

‘ O’SINISTER.’

Without hesitation, though not without indignation, Osmond returned the following answer to his Lordship :

‘ MY LORD,

‘ Were I to grant to threats what I have refused to solicitation, I should incur, what, since my commencement in life, it has been my study to avoid.... my own contempt !

‘ Reflection, so far from convincing me I committed an error in resisting your Lordship’s wishes for my departure hence, has tended to convince me that I should have been guilty of an unpardonable one, had I acquiesced in them.

‘ If, therefore, nothing but acting contrary to my own sense of right can avert the storm you speak of, it must burst ; for never will I purchase temporary safety by the voluntary forfeiture of self-esteem. I may be oppressed, but never can I feel humbled, while I can lay my hand upon my heart, and say I merit not oppression.

‘ I remain, my Lord,

‘ Your Lordship’s

‘ Obedient servant,

‘ OSMOND MUNRO.’

Had a doubt lingered on the mind of Osmond of Lord O’Sinister’s having some secret motive for wishing to drive him from Naples, this letter would have removed it ; but what this motive could possibly be, he was still at as great a loss as ever to conjecture.

Finding, the more he reflected on his conduct, the more agitated he became, he endeavoured, as much as possible, to divert his thoughts from dwelling on it.

He had dined, and was trying to amuse them by reading, when three ruffianly looking men, followed by Mactalla, pale with affright, abruptly entered his apartment, and striding up to the table, at which he was sitting, the foremost, in no very complacent accent, enquired whether his name was not Munro ?

‘ For if it be,’ he continued, ‘ we have an order to take you to the dungeons of the palace.’*

‘ The dungeons of the palace !’ repeated Osmond, in a tone of surprise, and laying down his book ; ‘ and pray on what account ?’

‘ O, that you’ll hear when you get there ; all we have to do is to lodge you there in safety, which to a certainty we shall, if your name be Munro.’

‘ It is,’ said Osmond, impressively.

‘ No such thing....no such thing,’ cried Mactalla, coming forward ; ‘ by the Powers if you lay a finger on him,’ glancing at the ruffians with a countenance as crimsoned with passion as but a minute before it had been blanched by terror, ‘ you’ll repent it the longest day you have to live ; for this is not Mr. Munro, this is Count Placentia.’

‘ Count Placentia !’ repeated one of the fellows, sneeringly. ‘ Why, didn’t he tell us himself this instant that his name was Munro ?’

‘ Don’t believe a word of it,’ cried Mactalla ; ‘ this is a common trick with him, when he wants to have a little fun.’

‘ A little fun !....By the lord then he’ll find he’ll have no fun for saying so now,’ rejoined the ruffian, ‘ since his having done so will to a certainty lay him in one of the cold damp dungeons of the palace, except some one better known than your worship can testify his being Count Placentia.’

‘ My name, I repeat,’ said Osmond, impressively, ‘ is Munro.’

‘ No such thing....no such thing,’ again vociferated Mactalla, almost out of breath with fear and agitation,

* The ancient palace of the sovereigns, near the Capuan gate, is now occupied by courts of law, and its cellars are transformed into dungeons for malefactors, and prisoners of all descriptions.

and endeavouring, as he spoke, to catch the eyes of his master, in order to give him what he intended should be a significant wink.

‘Why, what stuff is this!’ with a ferocious aspect, and in a surly tone, exclaimed another of the ruffians: ‘do you think we shall believe you before the gentleman himself?....no, no, the Signor has acknowledged himself to be the man we want, so to prison he must go.’

So saying, he and one of his companions laid hold of Osmond, as if intending to drag him along.

‘My friends,’ cried Osmond, with calmness, and disengaging himself from their grasp, ‘there is no occasion for violence. It is my intention to accompany you quietly.’

‘Accompany them quietly!’ repeated Mactalla, aghast; ‘accompany such a set of cut-throat looking dogs, without knowing why or wherefore! no, no, you must not think of such a thing; let me call up the people of the house, and I’ll answer for it we’ll soon put them to flight.’

‘No,’ said Osmond, ‘I insist upon your not attempting a thing of the kind,’ (convinced, in his own mind, of this being the storm with which Lord O’Sinister had threatened him, and unwilling on many accounts to give the least publicity to the affair.) ‘I insist on your not mentioning what has happened. Remain here quietly this evening, and to-morrow let me see you.’

‘Come, come, Signor,’ cried one of the ruffians impatiently, ‘we can tarry no longer;’ and again he stretched out his arm, as if intending to seize Osmond’s.

‘I am ready to attend you,’ replied Osmond, eluding his grasp.

They descended the stairs in silence, and without encountering any one. One of the men led the way, and Osmond walked between the other two, followed by Mactalla, who could not be prevented attending his steps, to see where they would take him; lamenting all the way their ever having quitted the Castle of Acerenza, the good Marchesa Morati, the kind Count Placentia.

‘O if they knew what was passing here,’ cried he, ‘to be sure they wouldn’t order out the travelling equipage immediately ; but no matter....no matter, by blessed St. Benedict, if things don’t soon take a turn, they shall shortly hear from me.’

‘On arriving at the prison, Osmond was delivered over to the keeper. Mactalla was following him into it, when the fellow, in a fierce voice, demanding what he wanted, occasioned him to pause.

‘Nothing in the world,’ said Mactalla, in a gentle voice, trusting complaisance might have a mollifying effect ; ‘but only, like a dutiful servant, to be allowed to attend upon my good master here.’

‘Your master must do without attendance now,’ cried the keeper, in a still more surly tone : and rudely pushing him into the street, he slapped the ponderous door in his face.

Osmond was immediately after conducted to a dungeon, which, judging from the number of steps he descended to it, he concluded to be sunk far below the surface of the earth. As soon as he had entered it, the man who conducted him made a movement towards the door with the lamp, as if intending to leave him to all the horrors of darkness.

‘May I not have a light?’ asked Osmond, in an agitated voice.

‘Why as you are not a malefactor, you may be indulged with one,’ grumbled out the man, ‘and with a clean truss of straw, provided you can pay for it.’

Osmond drew out his purse ; the man set down the lamp, and withdrew. In a few minutes he returned with the straw, which he spread upon a long broad bench, in a corner of the dungeon. While thus employed, Osmond, although he had scarce a doubt upon his mind of having been arrested at the suit of Lord O’Sinister, for the debt of three hundred pounds which he had contracted to his Lordship in England, was induced, by a hope of being able to learn something of the further intentions of his Lordship, to enquire whether he knew the cause of his imprisonment?

'Why yes,' returned the man, 'tis owing to a countryman of your own, a nobleman I think they style him.'

'Can you inform me whether he has given any particular instructions respecting me?' asked Osmond.

'I can give you no information on the subject,' replied the man, surlily, 'because 'tis not my business to tattle. His lawyer, I dare say, will be with you to-morrow, and then perhaps he'll gratify your curiosity.'

He then, having received the money he demanded for what he termed his civility, withdrew for the night, carefully barricading the door after him.

On being left to himself, Osmond took up the lamp, to examine the dreary chamber, of which he had so unexpectedly become the inmate. He found it damp and miserable in the extreme; nor could he, though he elevated the lamp high above his head, discover either grating or aperture, through which the light of day could gain admission to it.

'In vain,' sighed he, despondently, as he replaced the lamp on the rugged floor, 'in vain does the sun arise for the inhabitants of these wretched cells; in vain for them the breath of heaven diffuse health and sweetness round; no cheering beam, no renovating gale find entrance here; and to aggravate the horror of the circumstance, 'tis man, cruel and unfeeling man, that excludes the precious blessings....he who for his kindred being, at least, should feel some touch of pity.'

That Lord O'Sinister would have acted as in the present instance, would have had the inhumanity, the illiberality to arrest him for a debt, which it might fairly be said he had forced upon him, Osmond's conduct, in taking no precaution for his safety, notwithstanding the threatening letter of his Lordship, fully proved his having no apprehension.

That he had given instructions to have his confinement rendered as grievous as possible to him, under the idea, that in proportion to its horrors would be his eagerness to accede to any terms that should release him from it, Osmond entertained no doubt.

'But he will find himself mistaken,' cried he, with an exulting smile, and a cheek glowing at the thoughts of an

anticipated triumph, as with agitated steps he paced his cell ; ' mistaken, in imagining coercive measures would ever bend me to his purpose ; that for personal freedom I would ever submit to mental bondage....submit to be slave rather than a prisoner !....no, equal to his malice shall he find my courage ; his shafts may pierce, but they shall not subdue my spirit.'

But transient was the satisfaction, the pleasure which Osmond derived from the thoughts of disappointing the malice, of resisting the tyranny of his persecutor : should he find him inexorable, determined to refuse him his liberty, except he acquiesced in his wishes, what then, suddenly reflected, would become of him !

' But no, no, 'tis impossible I should find him so,' cried, and starting, recovering a little from the shuddering and sickening emotion this agonizing idea had given birth to ; ' impossible, except he is utterly devoid of sincerity ; for he cannot regard the father and sacrifice the son ; when he finds that I am not to be prevailed on to do what he requires, he will doubtless set me free.

' But, good Heavens ! what may not occur in the interim,' thought Osmond, striking his forehead, almost distracted at the idea, ' while he is endeavouring to accomplish his views : the Duke D'Amalfi may send for me, Mrs. Raymond may contrive to give me some intimation of her abode, and with both perhaps I may be ruined forever, by not being able to wait upon them immediately.

' Suppose I write to the tyrant,' cried he, after musing a few minutes, ' a calm and expostulatory letter, representing the uselessness of detaining me here, as my resolution is not to be shaken, and calling upon him, by regard he entertains for my father, to restore me to the liberty which can alone enable me to discharge my pecuniary obligations to him ; but no,' he suddenly and passionately exclaimed, ' no....perish the idea of soliciting him whom I despise, of asking a favour from him, who can no longer inspire me with gratitude. Patiently and quietly I will, I am determined, await his decision.

But patiently and quietly he could not think of the co

sequences this decision must lead to, should it be unfavourable.

Vibrating between hope and apprehension, now flattering himself Lord O'Sinister would speedily open his prison gates, now despairing of their ever being unbarred, except he complied with the wishes of his Lordship, which he solemnly vowed never to do ; now dwelling with that agonizing fondness on the idea of his native home, the beloved connexions he feared he was for ever separated from, which the heart of feeling never fails of experiencing for the home and the friends it despairs of again beholding ; now on that of the fair Cordelia, who, like a bright vision, had suddenly burst upon his sight, and as suddenly disappeared....he passed the greatest part of the night in pacing his dungeon, till quite exhausted by the agitation of his mind, he threw himself upon his straw, but had not rested many minutes on it, when sounds of distress, perhaps imaginary ones, for at the moment he was in a state of mind perfectly calculated to give birth to such, caused him to start up, and again pace the cell with impatient steps. He heard, or fancied he heard, which had quite the same effect upon him, the clanking of chains, the groan of captivity, the long-drawn and piercing shriek of despair.

' Oh God !' he cried, with uplifted hands, while the pangs of shuddering humanity, of agonized sensibility, bedewed his forehead with a cold perspiration, ' if destined to remain in this situation, shut up my senses, that I may not hear the cry of distress I cannot alleviate, that so I may be spared the misery of knowing there are others as wretched as myself.'

He again courted sleep, and at length it weighed down his eyelids ; but frightful and unconnected dreams prevented its affording him refreshment. On awaking, he was surprised, by finding Mactalla beside him weeping, at beholding him in so deplorable a situation.

The poor fellow, whom inquietude and concern about his master had prevented closing his eyes all night, and whom the first glimpse of day had found at the prison-door, had fought a hard battle to get admittance to him. First he coaxed, as he called....but to use his own words,

might as well have whistled ; then he scolded....but only got him some hard knocks from the guards. At last he hit the right nail on the head, as he chose to press it ; for enquiring for the keeper, he took him aside and putting into his hand a purse, not badly filled, immediately obtained from him the indulgence he required.

Osmond, as he arose from his hard couch, thanked him for the anxiety he manifested about him.

‘ Thank me !....thank me ! ’ cried Mactalla, scarcely able to suppress the tears that again started to his eyes, ‘ only doing my duty ; but did you sleep ? ’ he continued in an anxious tone, and looking alternately at the stranger and the heavy eyes of his master ; ‘ no, not a wink dare say ; how should you indeed in such a place ! the barbarians ! to thrust any Christian into such a hole so damp, and so black, and so filthy. Ah, this is not the way they treat prisoners in poor old Ireland ; there they let them walk about, as a body may say, at their liberty but....but don’t you think one can get some redress for this bad usage ? ’

‘ I don’t know ; I believe so, ’ replied Osmond, scarcely conscious of what he was saying, so disturbed, so bewildered was he by his situation.

‘ To be sure they can, ’ said Mactalla, receiving from himself the answer he wished for. ‘ I mean to call directly upon the Duke D’Amalfi, who I know very well having often seen him at Acerenza, and been notified there by him....and a condescending agreeable nobleman he is, as any in this kingdom or the next to it....I will explain the whole affair in a handsome gentlemanly manner to him ; upon which I have no doubt he’ll instantly say to me....Mr. Mactalla, be so good as take this purse, with my kind compliments to your master, and tell him to pay his debt to that big rogue countryman of his. ’

‘ How, ’ cried Osmond, starting, and in an accent expressive of astonishment, ‘ do you then know the cause of my confinement ? ’

‘ Do I !....do you think I could have rested without learning it ?....no, no ; something struck me that it was owing to that blackguard of a Lord in the Largo C

ilio. He a Lord !...by the Powers I'd be ashamed to be called a Lord, after hearing of such conduct in one ; so to put myself out of all doubt on the matter, away I posted from the prison last night to his house, and sure enough found I was not mistaken.'

'And pray,' demanded Osmond, in a collected tone, and with a keenly scrutinizing glance, 'what cause had you for suspecting Lord O'Sinister of enmity towards me ?'

Mactalla looked a little confused at this question, which Osmond perceiving, he pressed it still more home upon him ; and at length, received an explicit answer.

'Well,' rejoined Osmond, 'I must insist on your not commenting to any one on his Lordship's conduct towards me.'

'To be sure,' returned Mactalla ; 'as long as you have your hand in the lion's mouth, one must be quiet and easy ; but as soon as it is drawn out, why then I hope one may have the pleasure of speaking their mind freely. But this is losing time ; I'll fly to the Duke D'Amalfi directly, borrow the money we want, pay off this disgrace to our country, get a receipt in full of all demands, and then by the Powers you must give him a good big thrashing, and I'll stand by to see that no one interrupts you.'

'Hold !' exclaimed Osmond, catching him by the arm, as he was hastening from the dungeon ; 'at your peril I charge you not to go to the Duke D'Amalfi ; I would rather perish in this dungeon than be guilty of the indelicacy of soliciting such a favour from him as you allude to.'

'Then pray,' said Mactalla, with evidently forced calmness, and looking earnestly in his face, 'how do you propose settling this affair ?'

This was a question which Osmond was not prepared to answer....a question which he had not yet ventured to put to himself, and which now gave rise to emotions that caused him to turn with quickness from Mactalla, and again pace the cell with agitated steps.

'I say, Signor,' resumed Mactalla, following him, 'if you disdain owing an obligation to his Excellency, how, in the name of Heaven, do you expect to get out of this

frightful place, or be revenged upon that old blackguard that put you into it ?'

'No matter...no matter,' cried Osmond, impatiently, and still endeavouring to avoid his eyes, by again turning from him; 'this is his hour,' added he, scarcely conscious of what he was saying, 'mine is yet to come.'

'That's as much as to say,' cried Mactalla, 'that cats may mew, and dogs will have their day : by St. Benedict but you couldn't have said any thing more to the purpose ; but, Signor, let me implore you.....'

Here the entrance of the keeper, to announce Lord O'Sinister's lawyer, interrupted him, and this gentleman expressing a wish to be left alone with Osmond, he was ordered to retire, which he accordingly did, but with a very bad grace, and not without a suspicious glance at the professional man.

'Well, young man,' began the lawyer, as soon as he found himself alone with Osmond, 'I am come hither by the command of Lord O'Sinister, to inform you, that notwithstanding the ingratitude, insolence, and baseness of your conduct towards him, he is willing, out of compassion to you, and regard to your father, to forgive the past, and restore you to freedom, provided you consent to quit Naples immediately, and accept the advantageous situation he has procured you in Jamaica.'

'Never,' cried Osmond, resolutely, and indignantly, 'never ; the liberty of which his Lordship has deprived me is not half so estimable in my eyes, as that of which he seeks to rob me....the liberty of acting agreeably to the dictates of my reason.'

'Your reason !' repeated the lawyer, with a supercilious smile ; 'take my advice, and let prudence dictate to you in the present instance.'

'You already know my determination, Sir,' said Osmond, haughtily ; 'it were superfluous, therefore, to repeat it.'

'Then pray may I enquire how you hope to be liberated ? for Lord O'Sinister desired me to tell you he is positively determined on keeping you in prison, except you comply with his wishes, till you have discharged

your bond to him for three hundred pounds, bearing interest.'

'Fairly and candidly, replied Osmond, 'then, I inform you, that I behold no prospect whatever of being able to liquidate my debt to his Lordship but by instalments, nor any chance of this prospect being realized, but by my immediate restoration to liberty. I have been recommended to the patronage of one of the most distinguished characters here, as his Lordship knows; but can derive no advantage from this circumstance, if he keeps me in confinement.'

'Well, I shall faithfully report what you have said to his Lordship, but apprise you in time, that I have not the least idea of his liberating you, on any other condition than your consenting to quit Naples immediately.'

'You will oblige me, Sir,' said Osmond, as if he had not heard this latter observation, 'by letting me know his decision as soon as possible.'

The other, after a few more efforts to obtain from him the acquiescence his client so much required, promised he would, and took his leave.

The keeper, shortly after, entered with chocolate, for Osmond's breakfast. Osmond, surprised at his not being accompanied by Mactalla, enquired for him, and learnt that he had fled from the prison, as if bitten by a tarantula, just before the lawyer's departure.

'In the course of my life,' said the keeper, 'I never saw a man perform greater antics. In spite of all I could do to prevent him, he would every now and then put his ear to the keyhole, to listen to your conversation with the lawyer; then he'd skip about, clap his hands, return to the door, and play a thousand other pranks, till at last.... 'I have it,' cried he, striking his forehead, and off he flew.'

Osmond was prevented reflecting on the strange conduct of his valet, by the number of lawyers that successively visited him, to offer their services, in endeavouring to arrange the affair that caused his imprisonment.... services which he peremptorily rejected, from a thorough conviction of their proving of no avail; and, at length, teased and wearied by their intrusion, gave orders that another should not be admitted to him.

* Scarcely had he issued these orders, when, to his great surprise, the Duke D'Angoumoise, a French emigrant nobleman, with whom he had formed an acquaintance at one of the public rooms, was introduced. His Grace entered with a countenance overshadowed with gloom; and in the most lively terms, expressed the regret he felt at seeing Osmond in such a deplorable situation....a regret, he protested, heightened almost beyond endurance by his inability to rescue him from it.

Osmond, penetrated and affected by such kindness in a stranger, could scarcely give utterance to the feelings it excited....feelings which rendered him quite forgetful, at the moment, of his having given himself some little claim to the attention and regard of his Grace, by having obliged him a few evenings back, with rather a considerable sum of money, in consequence of his dropping a hint, inadvertently it appeared, of his being extremely embarrassed and distressed, owing to his not receiving a remittance he had for some time been expecting from France.

As soon as his emotion had subsided, he begged to know by what means his Grace had discovered his being in confinement?

The Duke looked a little confused at this question, but quickly recovering himself, said he had seen him entering the prison; 'into which,' added he, 'I should have had no hesitation in instantly following you, for the purpose of enquiring whether I could have been of any service to you, but for the lateness of the hour. Friendship has now brought me hither; if, therefore, I can be of any use to you, point out the way, I implore you, and my zeal in your cause shall prove the alacrity and pleasure with which I undertake it.'

Osmond thanked him most sincerely for his readiness to serve him; but in the present instance, said he much feared it would not be in his power. He then, apprehensive if silent concerning the cause of his imprisonment, his Grace, whose esteem he was anxious to retain, from the high opinion he had conceived of him, might impute it to some dishonourable transaction, revealed the occasion of it, but with an injunction to secrecy; for

though he could no longer consider Lord O'Sinister as his friend, he could not forget that he had been, as he imagined, the friend of his family, and on that account was unwilling to expose him to censure.

'Ungenerous and illiberal indeed,' exclaimed the Duke, on Osmond's concluding his unvarnished tale, as if fired with indignation at the injurious treatment he had experienced.... 'By Heavens, this tyrant Lord deserves to be called to a severe account for his conduct to you.'

'And doubtless he will,' rejoined Osmond; 'the heart, my dear Duke, seldom lets a cruel or ignoble action pass with impunity.'

'Perhaps not,' returned his Grace; 'but I must confess the punishment it may inflict would be quite too slow and secret to satisfy my vengeance, were I injured; but should his Lordship shew a still stronger disposition than he has already done, to remain inexorable, shall I wait on him in your behalf?'

'I scarcely think,' said Osmond, with a heavy sigh, 'I shall be able to prevail on myself to make an overture to him; but should I, I shall most undoubtedly be happy to avail myself of your Grace's kind offer.'

He then invited his Grace to partake of his breakfast, which had hitherto remained untouched; and while taking it, mentioned the number of lawyers that had called upon him.

The Duke laughed at the recital.... 'Excuse my mirth,' said he, 'but the astonishment you expressed at the number of lawyers that offered their services to you occasioned it, by bringing to my mind an anecdote of Pope Innocent the Eleventh, and the Marquis Carpio. The latter being desired by the former to furnish him with thirty thousand herd of swine, informed him that he could not possibly spare his swine; but if his Holiness required thirty thousand lawyers, such a number was very much at his service. However, continued his Grace, 'notwithstanding their numbers, they all contrive to get a living, the disposition of the Neapolitans being naturally fiery and litigious, insomuch that there are very few persons of distinction who have not a cause depend-

ing: for when a Neapolitan cavalier has nothing else to do, he very gravely shuts himself up in his closet, and tumbles over his papers, to see whether he cannot start a lawsuit, and consequently plague any of his neighbours.'

'How greatly does this propensity to litigation prove them altered since the time of Statius,' observed Osmond, 'at least if they then merited his eulogium on them....'

'By love of right, and native justice led,
In the straight paths of equity they tread;
Nor know the bar, nor fear the judge's frown,
Unpractis'd in the wranglings of the gown.'



CHAP. XIV.

'Search, and know all mankind's mysterious ways,
But trust the secret of thy soul to none:
..... This is the way....
This only, to be safe in such a world as this is.'

Rowe.

THE keeper entered abruptly, and to the astonishment of Osmond, informed him he was free. Osmond demanded of him to whom he was indebted for his discharge?

'I have no time to waste in telling you particulars,' replied he, in a surly accent; 'to know you have got it, might satisfy you, I think.'

Osmond asked no further questions, nor delayed returning to the hotel, accompanied by his friend, the Duke D'Angoumoise; but by no means as happy at his unexpected restoration to liberty, as might have been expected. The idea of its being owing to the interference of Mactalla with the Duke D'Amalfi, entirely damped the pleasure it was calculated to afford him.... In this idea he was confirmed the moment he cast his eyes upon his valet, whom he found in his drawing-room.

'So, Sir,' said he, 'I perceive you have thought proper to disregard my orders.'

'Well, I confess I have, Signor,' returned Mactalla; 'but I am sure when you give yourself time to reflect, you must acknowledge it would have been surprising if I had not....surprising, if I had let you remain in a damp dungeon, when I knew I could get you out of it; and, moreover, that the Marchesa Morati and Count Placentia, who gave you, in a manner, as one may say, into my care, would never forgive me, if I had acted otherwise.'

'A pretty light,' cried Osmond, who, notwithstanding his vexation, was scarcely able to suppress a smile at this latter assertion, 'you must have made me appear in to his Excellency.'

'In as handsome a light as you could desire, Signor.... I know his Excellency intimately, as I believe I have already mentioned, so I went to him. I told him plump that I had come out of my own head, (which, to be sure, was no lie,) to borrow three hundred pounds for you; as through my forgetting your portmanteau at Venosa, in which was the principal part of your cash, you were put to very great inconvenience for that sum, your pride being too great to allow you to borrow of any one, which I knowing, I had made bold to wait upon his Excellency, to ask it of him, taking it for granted he would be happy to have an opportunity of conferring a favour on a person to whom his friends and relations at Acerenza were under such great obligations; Count Placentia being certainly indebted to you for the preservation of his life and the right use of his senses....' 'Aye, aye, so he is,' cried the good Duke; 'and there is nothing, on that account, which I would not do to serve the Chevalier, your master; so take this purse to him,' presenting me one, 'and give him my compliments, and I will have the pleasure of calling on him in the course of the day.'..... 'That I will, an please your Excellency,' said I; and away I flew to seek a lawyer, to settle the rest of the business. By the Powers, no one can be at a loss to find one here....the instant it was known I wanted one, they

came flocking about me like a swarm of bees ; and ‘ give it to me,’ cries one of them, meaning the purse, which I kept in my hand, and ‘ give it to me,’ cries another... ‘ Softly, softly, gentlemen,’ says, I, ‘ I’ll give my money to neither one nor other of you ; but if any one of you will follow me into the prison, to settle a little business I have to transact there, I will give him...what I think proper.’

Though this statement did not, by any means, tend to reconcile Osmond to the conduct of Mactalla, still he could not bring himself to express any further disapprobation of it, owing, as he clearly saw it was, to the sincerity of his regard for him. He determined, however, to acquit himself, without delay, of meanness and deception in the eyes of the Duke D’Amalfi, by coming to a candid and immediate explanation with his Excellency, on the subject.

‘ Well,’ said the French Duke, ‘ ’tis unnecessary, I presume, my dear friend, to say that I most sincerely rejoice at your restoration to liberty....rejoice at your having so speedy an opportunity of chastising the person who deprived you of it....You doubtless,’ he added, as if he looked upon his doing so as a thing of course, ‘ mean to demand satisfaction of Lord O’Sinister for his conduct to you ?’

Osmond looked with astonishment for a few minutes at his Grace, without speaking.

‘ Certainly not the kind of satisfaction which your Grace, I fancy, means,’ he then replied : ‘ even though I had received from his Lordship what I was conscious the world would consider sufficient provocation to justify my requiring such from him, still would my principles, the profession I have embraced ; the disparity of our ages, and many other powerful considerations, withhold me from such a measure. As I have already said, I leave it to Lord O’Sinister’s own reflections, to revenge the injurious treatment I have experienced from him.’

‘ And is it possible,’ demanded his Grace, bending his dark and penetrating eyes upon Osmond, ‘ that you can think of sitting down patiently under the wrongs you have met with from him ?’

Osmond bowed.

The Duke shrugged his shoulders and smiled sarcastically.... 'Well, my young friend,' cried he, shaking his head, 'I may envy your forbearance, but, I candidly confess, I do not admire it. The coolness of philosophy is unnatural in the season of youth; but you, doubtless, are the best judge of your own actions. I shall now,' he added, smiling still more superciliously, 'take my leave, as you may perhaps have some preparations to make for the illustrious visitor you are expecting.'

So saying, he withdrew with a sliding bow from the room.

Never had Osmond felt himself so hurt....so irritated, as at the moment, insomuch that had his Grace remained another minute, he probably would have convinced him he did not possess that kind of coolness which he had so sneeringly attributed to him. In a short time, however, he recollected himself sufficiently to rejoice that the French Duke, by his precipitate departure, had prevented any thing of an unpleasing nature occurring between them.... 'As no doubt,' said he to himself, 'reflection will convince him that, without acting contrary to the character which, from the line of life I have embraced, it behoves me to support, I could not act otherwise than I intend with regard to Lord O'Sinister.'

A long and early visit from the Duke D'Amalfi gave a turn to his thoughts.... Though advanced in life, his Excellency still retained a countenance full of spirit and vivacity; his conversation, too, was highly animated; his manners and address insinuating in the extreme: altogether he was one of those kind of characters that instantly attract attention, and almost as immediately conciliate respect and esteem. The prepossession which Osmond had conceived in his favour, from the description he had received of him from his friends at Acerenza, was confirmed the moment he beheld him; but had the reverse been the case, he would have been deficient indeed in sensibility, as nothing could be more gracious....more condescending than his Excellency's conduct to him. He spoke of the services he had rendered the Acerenza family as if done to himself, and protested nothing could

afford him greater happiness than to evince his grateful sense of these, by taking him by the hand on every occasion.

Persuaded, from some inadvertent expressions of Mactalla's that Osmond was unpleasantly situated with regard to money matters, his Excellency resolved not to delay putting into his hands the whole of the sum he had received for his use from Count Placentia, and for the express purpose of doing which was his present visit.

His Lordship's injunction to silence on the subject being too strict to allow him to think of violating it, he gave Osmond to understand that the sum with which he thus surprised him, was the produce of a kind of sinecure situation, which he had had vacant for some time in his gift, but considered as his, from the moment he had been recommended to his patronage by Count Placentia, and the nature of which, he added, he would explain to him in the course of a few days, when he should be at leisure to see and entertain him at his palace.

Osmond was not without a strong suspicion that the case was not exactly as his Excellency had represented, but was withheld, by a fear of giving offence, from divulging it: that he entertained such a one, however, his countenance plainly intimated to his Excellency.....After he had expressed the high sense he entertained of his goodness and condescension, he entered into an explanation relative to Mactalla, which afforded no little amusement to the Duke, and by being placed to the right account, rendered him still more pleased with his *protégé*. Osmond, after discharging the pecuniary obligation which his attendant had been the means of laying him under to his Excellency, found himself still master of nine hundred pounds, the principal part of which sum he resolved on remitting the next day to his father, the want of cash might not be any hindrance to his immediately coming over, with his family, to Italy, where Osmond now considered himself settled for life.

He was about proceeding the next morning to a banker's, for the purpose of procuring an order on England for his father, when the French Duke abruptly entered his apartment....'My dear friend,' cried he, with hi

usual insinuating smile, as soon as Mactalla, who was attending on his master, had withdrawn, 'I fear greatly that the business which has brought me hither will make you doubt the sincerity of my regard....nay, I am convinced it will, if you are one of those who think a man should prefer the safety to the reputation of his friend.'

Osmond started....'The reputation!' he repeated with emotion....'I really cannot comprehend your Grace's meaning....be so obliging as to explain it.'

The Duke bowed.

'The indignation which I experience whenever I hear of a base or ungenerous deed,' cried he, 'the abhorrence in which I hold any thing like oppression or cruelty, made me anxious for you to call Lord O'Sinister to account for his conduct to you. Your declining to do this rendered me dissatisfied, as doubtless you perceived. That your motives for your forbearance towards him were truly praiseworthy, reflection tended to convince me; still, however, I could not be reconciled to it, not only because I felt your injuries as if they were my own, but because I was inclined to think the world would not approve of it: but notwithstanding this dissatisfaction, I determined never again to obtrude the subject on you.... a determination in which I should have persevered, but for the occurrence of last night. Chance threw me into a party of which his Lordship was one. Neither the speciousness of his manners, nor the high estimation in which he appeared to be held by the rest of the company, had any influence over the unfavourable sentiments with which his behaviour to you had inspired me for him. I viewed him with a chilling aspect, and studiously avoided entering into conversation with him. In the course of the evening, the Duke D'Amalfi happened to become the subject of discourse....Like other great men, he has enemies as well as friends. Prejudiced in his favour by his conduct towards you, I ranked myself on the side of the latter, and warmly opposed some bitter sarcasms thrown out against him, advancing, as a proof of his meriting the reputation he possesses for liberality of sentiment and generosity of feeling, his behaviour to you. Lord O'Sinister, upon this, immediately took me up.

He did not deny, he said, its being a proof of his being generous ; but he assuredly should its being a proof of his possessing either prudence or discernment, since, if wise, he certainly would not have bestowed a favour till assured it was merited ; nor, if discerning, have failed of seeing that, in the present instance, this was not the case. My retort to this observation was acrimonious in the extreme....I avowed myself your friend, and insisted on his Lordship's silence respecting you, except he spoke of you in the terms you deserved. He maliciously protested he should do so in no other ; and in order to acquit himself, he said, of the cruelty and injustice of which I accused him, proceeded to assign such reasons for his conduct to you, as certainly, to those who believed him, must have justified it. I, however, was not of the number ; I spoke of the manner in which you had passed over the wrongs received at his hands, as a proof of the nobleness of your mind. He laughed sneeringly at the assertion, and openly declared it was not from principle, but.....But I will not my dear friend, shock you by repeating the degrading expression he made use of ; suffice it to mention, he said that it was the want of spirit, which you manifested on every occasion, that had given him such a prejudice against you....a want of which you had given the most unequivocal demonstration, by resisting all his solicitations to you, though backed by those of your friends, to enter the army, in which he could have provided most amply for you....Nay, hear me out,' continued the Duke, observing the quivering lips of Osmond open....'He bade me tell you, that so far from thinking more highly of you, for your forbearance towards him, he despised you for it ; and should ever continue to do so, by ascribing it to the most degrading motives. In short, my dear friend, except you notice in the usual way his conduct to you, it will be utterly impossible for you to remain in Naples, as nothing else can prove the vile appellation, with which he has branded you, unfounded.'

'Enough, enough,' cried Osmond, in an agitation to which no language could do justice....'Were I to hesitate about doing what is necessary to remove from my

honour the stigma which he has cast upon it, I should deserve to lie under it the remainder of my life. The heart cannot be read ; I cannot wonder, therefore, that forbearance beyond a certain point should be misinterpreted. Lord O'Sinister, by putting it out of my power to recover my reputation in any other manner, forces me to raise my hand against him....let the issue of the affair, therefore, be what it may, I trust I shall be acquitted in the sight of Heaven and the world.'

'Doubt it not,' cried the Duke hastily : submission to wrongs is not required even by religion, much less by society. The man who does not feel what is due to his character, and act accordingly, must be an object of general disesteem and contempt. It stands therefore to reason, that resentment, which can alone actuate him to do this, is an useful principle in human nature, implanted for the wisest purposes, to guard private rights, and restrain the malevolence of the violent ; and that, therefore.....'

'My dear Duke,' interrupted Osmond, with a forced smile, 'argument is unnecessary in this instance. I have decided how to act, and only want to know whether you will be my friend on this occasion ?'

'Assuredly,' replied the Duke....'could you suppose otherwise ? I presume,' and Osmond thought he spoke with eagerness, ' 'tis your wish that I should wait upon Lord O'Sinister immediately ?'

Osmond bowed....'I fly then,' said his Grace ; and kissing his hand to Osmond, he darted from the room, leaving him a prey to the most painful and opposite feelings and reflections.

Notwithstanding the provocation he had received from Lord O'Sinister, and his possessing a naturally a warm and impetuous spirit, keenly susceptible of wrong, and proudly indignant at it, he could not forbear shuddering at the thoughts of raising his hand against him, whom he believed to have been the benefactor of his family....The die, however, was cast....to retract the determination he had avowed to the French Duke, was not to be thought of ; he therefore strove to think with calmness on what appeared to be inevitable.

His ambassador to Lord O'Sinister speedily returned.... 'Well, my friend,' said he, the moment he entered the apartment, 'I have settled all matters with his Imperial Highness. This evening, about seven o'clock, he will meet you at the meeting I demanded of him for you, in one of the fields which skirt the west end of the city, a few miles from this. Lest, however, you should be tempted to imagine me fond of sanguinary measures, I as soon as you I endeavoured to compromise the affair between you, by proposing to him his publicly retracting what he had said to your disadvantage, and making an apology for the same; but against such a measure he positively protested. In the first place, he said he would not retract an assertion which he knew to be just; in the next, declared that you had set afloat reports concerning him, which had inspired him with such a thirst for vengeance, that except you gave him an opportunity of gratifying it, by meeting him like a man of spirit, it was his fixed determination to post you through Naples for a poltroon.'

'Say no more, I beseech you, on the subject,' said Osmond, in a hurried and agitated accent, 'lest you get in my bosom a spirit as malignant....as savage as I am.'

He then expressing a wish to be left for a little while to himself, the French Duke took his leave till evening. As soon as he departed, Osmond repaired to a bank where he procured an order on a house in London for seven hundred pounds, which he enclosed in a letter to his sister, to be forwarded if he fell in the approaching rencontre, and which contained a circumstantial account of all that had befallen him since his arrival in Naples. He also wrote to Count Placentia and the Duke of Angoulême, to thank them for the kindness he had experienced from their hands, and assure them, to his last moment he cherished the most grateful remembrance of it.... The next letters, after touching on their contents, he delivered to the French Duke on his return in the evening, with entreaty for their being forwarded, should he fall, as far as possible after his decease. He also, in case this plan should be put into his hands a hundred pounds, as a legacy for Mactalla, and another for the expences of his

ral. All matters being finally arranged, and the Duke having solemnly plighted his word that he would, in every instance, obey the instructions he had received from him, should there be occasion, which however, he fervently hoped there might not, they set out for the place of appointment in a carriage, which they dismissed within a few yards of it.

They found Lord O'Sinister and his second already on the ground. Osmond retired to a distance, but the French Duke approached them, and, by his gestures, it seemed to Osmond as if he was again endeavouring to have the business settled in an amicable manner. That, if he had made such an effort, he had failed in it, however, was soon obvious to Osmond, by seeing him and the other second busily employed in loading pistols, with a brace of which the Duke shortly joined him, saying.... 'The man is a savage; he will not hearken to any terms of accommodation.'

As Osmond took the pistol from the Duke, a deep sigh escaped him....not on his own account, however, was it breathed, but on that of the sufferings his family would experience should he fall....the loss they would sustain should he now be torn from them...now, that he had every prospect of being able to assist them essentially. His reflections on the subject were interrupted by the Duke exclaiming....'My dear friend, what are you about? Lord O'Sinister has taken aim at you....why don't you advance your pistol.'

Osmond raised it, but ere he had well drawn the trigger, he received a ball in his right arm, which obliged him to drop his weapon, and at the same instant, to his unutterable astonishment, as well as horror, (since he was not conscious of having taken any certain aim at him,) he beheld Lord O'Sinister fall!

'Be off,' cried the French Duke hastily; 'for his Lordship is shot.'

Osmond, however, remained motionless, wildly staring at his fallen opponent....'My dear friend, proceeded the Duke impatiently, 'you can do no good by lingering here; on the contrary, you are preventing that prompt assistance being rendered to his Lordship which he re-

quires, for till I see you off, I cannot think of approaching him; fly, and depend on my instantly joining his second, to see every thing that is requisite done for him.'

'Whither shall I fly?' asked Osmond.

'Do you perceive yonder lonely building?' cried the Duke, pointing to a distant one.

'I do,' said Osmond.

'Cross those fields in front of us,' resumed the Duke, 'and you will find yourself at it; remain there till you see me, which will be as soon as I hear the surgeon's report of his Lordship's case; should it be a favourable one, you may return to your lodgings, but if the reverse, you must make your escape with all possible expedition, as his Lordship has many powerful friends in Naples, who, no doubt, will exert themselves to avenge his death....But see, my friend,' casting his eyes upon the arm of Osmond, which was bleeding fast, 'you have also suffered yourself, in this unfortunate rencontre!.... Permit me to make use of this handkerchief;' and drawing one from the pocket of Osmond, he bound it round his wound, and then again conjured him to fly.

Osmond turned into the path he had been directed by his Grace to take, and advanced forward, but without well knowing what he did. On reaching the building where he was to take shelter, he found it to be a large old barn. The door being partly open, he entered, and having satisfied himself that no one was in the place, he closed it, and proceeded to a large heap of straw which he perceived in a corner, and upon which he threw himself, utterly exhausted by emotion and loss of blood; and happy would he have felt at the moment, had he been assured he never should have risen from it....so wretched did he feel on Lord O'Sinister's account, of whose being mortally wounded he had scarcely a doubt, from the manner in which he fell. The idea of his having provoked his fate, in no degree abated the horror with which it inspired Osmond; he felt that if his surmises respecting him were true, he never more should know happiness: how to act....whither to betake himself, should they prove so, he knew not, from the distracted state of his mind.

An hour elapsed without any thing occurring to interrupt his agonizing reflections ; the door was then suddenly pushed open, and by the faint light it admitted, Osmond beheld three men entering the barn, with something stretched across their arms. A few minutes sufficed to convince him that they were banditti, and that what they carried was a murdered body.

‘ Is there any snug hole,’ demanded one of them, in a true ruffianly accent, ‘ into which we could thrust this old fellow ?’

‘ Oh, let the priest do that for him,’ said a second ; ‘ there is a heap of something yonder....straw, I suppose ; let us tumble him on that, and be off for the corpse of his master, for should it be discovered yet awhile, an alarm will be given that may prevent our escape.’

‘ True,’ cried the third, ‘ no time should be lost in securing it ;’ and hastening to the corner in which Osmond lay, and which, fortunately for him, was by this time involved in almost total darkness, they threw the body close by him, and departed.

Osmond’s first impulse was immediately to fly the place ; but a moment’s reflection checked his obeying this, by representing to him the likelihood there was of the light without betraying him to the ruffians. He had scarcely made up his mind to quietly remaining where he was, ere they returned with another body, which they threw, with as little ceremony as they had done the preceding one, upon the straw, and then again withdrew. As soon as they retired, Osmond, anxious to ascertain the direction they took, raised his head from the straw, for the purpose of listening ; but from which he was quickly diverted by a faint moan. He started, uncertain whether or not his ear had deceived him....It was repeated, and he no longer doubted its proceeding from one of the bodies that had been flung beside him.....All the horrors of his own situation were now aggravated, by the idea of its preventing him from rendering any assistance to the poor sufferer at hand. While deliberating on the measures he should pursue, the risk he should run of missing the Duke D’Angoumoise, and falling into the power of the banditti, by venturing out on his ac-

count, the pushing open of the door again caused him to shrink into the straw, and hold in his breath.

For a few minutes a rustling noise, as of some one groping about, was all he heard; he then heard some one say, in a low muttering tone....‘ I certainly saw him enter this place....yes, yes, I am positive I am not mistaken; here, therefore, will I remain till I have sufficient light to look about me.’

This determination was not the most agreeable one in the world to Osmond; but in a minute after, the uneasiness it gave rise to was dissipated by the exclamation of....‘ Blessed St. Benedict!’ convincing him it was Mactalla who had last entered; he accordingly pronounced his name, and, in return, heard his own shouted forth, in the most joyful accent. He immediately extricated himself from the straw, and advancing towards the door, was followed thither by Mactalla, whom cautioning to speak in a lower key, he acquainted with the accident that had just occurred, and expressed a wish for him to go out, in quest of assistance for the unfortunate stranger.

‘ What, and leave you here to be butchered by the ruffians?’ demanded Mactalla.

‘ I don’t imagine there is any danger of their returning,’ replied Osmond; ‘ at all events, I am unwilling to quit this at present, lest my doing so should cause me to miss the Duke D’Angoumoise, whom I expect here every moment.’

‘ The Duke D’Angoumoise!’ repeated Mactalla, in a voice expressive of much astonishment, ‘ did he promise to join you here, Signor?’

‘ He did, else should I not expect him.’

‘ Then take my word for it, Signor, ’tis a promise he does not mean to keep.’

‘ What makes you think so?’ asked Osmond.

‘ I’ll tell you another time, Signor,’ returned Mactalla, ‘ for here I do not think it very safe for us to have much conversation.’

Osmond imputing to conjecture what he had said relative to the Duke, felt still unwilling to quit the barn; but finding him resolved on not leaving it without him,

at length quitted it, and struck into the road leading from Naples. They had not proceeded far, when they espied a light, glimmering through a grove which skirted one side of the way, and towards which they instantly hastened....Osmond, with a heart fluttering with joy at the idea of being able to procure assistance for the wounded stranger. After advancing some yards, they found themselves before a small low building, almost shrouded in trees, and from a lattice of which still beamed the light that had attracted them to it: but scarcely had they come within sight of it, when an unpleasant idea came across the mind of Osmond, that caused him to pause....It might be, he suddenly reflected, the hiding-place of the banditti he had seen in the barn. Mactalla, too, as if struck by the same idea, also stopped, and catching his master by the skirt of the coat, as if apprehensive of his proceeding, exclaimed in his ear....‘Softly, softly, Signor; by St. Benedict, we may have only quitted the den, to run into the jaws of the lion himself here.’

‘No,’ said Osmond, after a short interval of silence, during which he looked about him attentively....‘No, there is nothing in the appearance of this place indicative of its being the haunt of persons of the description you allude to; it looks more like the neat and peaceful abode of some industrious peasant. I will venture, therefore, to knock at it....In the cause of a distressed fellow-creature, he must be selfish indeed who would not run a little risk.’

Ere, however, he applied his hand to the door, he thought it advisable to listen a few minutes at it. Mactalla, not satisfied with listening, put his eye to the key-hole, and in the instant after, called out in a gentle tone; ‘Pray, open the door if you please.’

‘Do you see any one?’ asked Osmond anxiously.

‘By the Powers, I do!....one of the prettiest little creatures I ever clapped my eyes on,’ replied Mactalla, half raising his head....‘Look through the key-hole yourself, Signor, to be convinced I only speak truth.’

Osmond stooped, and beheld through the aperture an old man and a young girl, seated at a table, in a small neat

apartment, their looks directed towards the door, as they had heard something, and were rather alarmed, which their being, Osmond was soon convinced by hearing the girl exclaim in a terrified accent.... 'Grandfather, did you not hear somebody speak? I am sure I did.'

'No, child,' replied the old man, 'it was only the wind, as it rushed through the crevices of the door, you heard.'

'By the Powers!' cried Mactalla, who had applied his ear so close to the door as to be able to distinguish perfectly what was passing within, 'but you are mistaken, and your granddaughter is right.'

The old man, in a trembling voice, now demanded who was there?.... Osmond, in a tone well calculated to still alarm, replied.... 'Two travellers who have lost the way.'

'And who are in momentary expectation of being overtaken by a gang of robbers,' rejoined Mactalla, 'who have just dispatched two other travellers, who now lie bleeding in the barn above.'

'Alack-a-day! in my barn,' cried the old man, with emotion, but without opening the door.

'By St. Benedict, I don't know whether it is you or not,' answered Mactalla; 'but the sooner you open the door, the sooner you'll know.'

The door was now cautiously unbarred, and Osmond, at the sight of whose countenance the terror of the old man appeared to vanish, and his impatient valet, were admitted.

He briefly related to him the purpose for which they had intruded on him, and entreated, if he had the power, not to delay sending assistance to the unfortunate strangers in the barn.

'Alack-a-day!' cried the old man, shaking his head. 'I have not the power of rendering them any assistance. I have no body here with me but my granddaughter; but if you chuse, she'll shew you to a house not far from where you'll be able to procure what you require.'

'If you please then,' returned Osmond, 'we'll accept of her services.'

The fair Bianca, whose pretty face the gallantry

Mactalla had suffused with blushes, accordingly led the way through a spacious avenue cut through the grove, and bordered with lemon and orange trees, whose delightful exhalations revived the languid senses of Osmond, to a magnificent villa. As concisely as possible, she explained to the porter who admitted them into the hall, the business which had brought them thither, which he had no sooner heard, than he summoned several of the other domestics, for the purpose of getting some of them to hasten to the barn. Amongst these, Mactalla was agreeably surprised by discovering an old acquaintance, an attendant of the Duke D'Amalfi in his last visit to Acerenza, and by whom he was at the same instant recognized. Their mutual recognition was the means of discovering to Osmond that the house he was in belonged to the Duke, which Mactalla had no sooner heard, than he exclaimed aloud in the most joyous accent.... 'We are in luck, we are in luck! got into the right box after all!' and hastened to inform the servants that his master was the particular friend and favourite of theirs, and that, accordingly, the greater attention they paid him, the more they would oblige the master. Upon hearing which, the steward, a respectable elderly man, was called, who, on learning the intimacy that subsisted between Osmond and his lord, immediately ushered him into an elegant apartment, where refreshments were presently laid before him, whilst several servants were dispatched with lights and cordials to the barn, and orders to bring back the unfortunate stranger, whether dead or alive. The steward perceiving Osmond look pale and exhausted, proposed his remaining for the night at the villa.... a proposal which met with ready acquiescence, as till Osmond had heard from the Duke D'Angoumoise, he could not think of venturing back to Naples. On the steward's retiring to give directions for an apartment to be prepared for him, Osmond turned with impatience towards Mactalla, who had bowed and continued in the room with him, and desired to know by what means he had been able to trace him to the barn, and the reason he had for supposing the Duke D'Angoumoise would not fulfil his promise of returning thither?

‘You shall hear, Signor,’ answered Mactalla....‘No sooner had I cast my eyes upon the countenance of the Duke D’Angoumoise, who, by the bye, is.....’

‘My friend,’ said Osmond, hastily interrupting him and in a commanding tone, perceiving by the turn of his features that he was about uttering some free remark upon his Grace.

Mactalla bowed....‘Well, Signor, as I was about saying, no sooner had I looked in his face this morning when he called upon you, than my mind misgave me something was wrong: so when I quitted the room, stopped at the door.....’

‘Guilty of the meanness of listening!’ cried Osmond with a frowning aspect.

Mactalla shook his head, and thus proceeded....‘Well, Signor, what I heard then made me return to the same station when the Duke came back from Lord O’Sinister and thus I learnt that you were to meet his Lordship this evening, which, to be sure, I can’t say I was very sorry to hear, as I expected nothing less than that you would give him the dressing he so richly merited, for his conduct to you; so, making certain of this, I determined on seeing a little of the fun, and accordingly repaired to the place of appointment, where I hid me behind a hedge and it was a mercy my laughing did not betray me.’

‘Gracious Heaven!’ exclaimed Osmond, with mingled horror and disgust, ‘is it possible that you could laugh at the melancholy catastrophe you witnessed there?’

‘Why, do you really believe, Signor, that you would not Lord O’Sinister?’

‘Do I believe it?’ demanded Osmond. ‘How can I doubt it, after what I saw?’

‘Why, to be sure, his Lordship did sham a wounded man neatly. He put me in mind of a set of strolling players in the county of Cork, to whom my grandfather lent an old barn to play in, and who accordingly let me see them, they’d kill themselves to give them satisfaction and to be sure, to all appearance they kept their word for they had long knives, which they thrust into their sides; and we were all going away perfectly satisfied

when Tom Murphy, a young friend of mine, whispered in my ear that he saw one of the dead men rise up and walk away, as if nothing at all was the matter with him. I could not believe him ; so perceiving the foot of one of the dead ladies thrust beyond the curtain, I turned back to convince myself all was right, and gave it a gentle pinch, when, by the Powers, out she roared, and jumping up, walked quietly off, just as my Lord O'Sinister did when your back was turned....up he got, as nimble as a bee, met the French Duke more than half way, shook him heartily by the hand, and then walked off with him and his second ; upon which, here's a humbug ! said I to myself, and posted after you directly, to let you know the trick that had been played you ; but just as I saw you enter the barn, it came into my head, that they might be again plotting something against you, so I turned back in hopes of overtaking them and hearing what they were saying ; but not being able to discover them in any direction, I returned to you.'

' Good Heavens ! what a tale have you told me !' cried Osmond....' How great would be my indignation did I credit it ! but that I cannot do. Your senses must indeed, my good friend, have deceived you, for that such a villanous transaction would be connived at by the Duke D'Angoumoise, who is....'

' A big blackguard !' interrupted Mactalla, calmly.

' Silence,' exclaimed Osmond passionately ; ' I insist upon your not presuming to mention his Grace again in a disrespectful manner. I look upon him at present as one of my most sincere friends, and until I have reason to think the contrary, will uphold his character even at the risk of my life. You must repair to-morrow morning to Naples, at as early an hour as possible, when I trust you'll receive a favourable account of Lord O'Sinister's health.'

' Don't doubt it,' replied Mactalla.

The steward now re-entered the apartment ; he informed Osmond that the two unfortunate strangers had been brought to the villa. The servant was quite dead, he said ; but the surgeon, who had been called in to the assistance of the master, entertained hopes of his recovery.

He had been put to bed, he added, and every thing done that was requisite for him.

This information afforded Osmond very great pleasure. The steward's attention was now called to his wounded arm, from which his own and Mactalla's had been diverted, by the conversation that had just passed between them.... The surgeon was brought in to dress it. The ball had lodged in a fleshy part of the arm, so that it was easily extracted. While the wound was dressing, Mactalla did nothing but rage at the vile trick which he persisted in saying had been played upon his master.

'Those were desperate ruffians whom you were so unfortunate as to fall in with, Signor,' said the surgeon, while employed about the arm of Osmond, taking it for granted, as did the steward, that he had been wounded by those who attacked the other travellers.

'Desperate!' repeated Mactalla, 'aye, that you may say with a witness....who could have thought that a Lord and a Duke would have been guilty of such villany?'

'A Lord and a Duke!' cried the surgeon, with a wild stare of astonishment, 'capable of waylaying and murdering people!'

'Yes,' returned Mactalla; 'but, by the Powers, they shall pay for their tricks.'

'Really, my friend, you have strongly excited my curiosity,' said the surgeon.... 'will you be so good as to give me the particulars of the affair?'

'Oh, willingly,' cried Mactalla. 'You must know,' drawing a little nearer to him, 'that there is now in Naples an old thief called Lord O'Sinister, and a sly rogue of a Frenchman, called the Duke D'Angoumoise.... These.....'

Here he caught a glance, so expressive of anger and resentment, from his master, as to put a stop to all further communication on the subject, to the great disappointment of the surgeon, as his looks testified. The moment he had retired with the steward.... 'Gracious Heaven!' exclaimed Osmond, in the most impatient accent addressing Mactalla, 'knowing as you do, the predicament in which I at present stand with regard to Lord O'Sinister, how could you be so imprudent as to give a

hint of what has happened, to the surgeon? I may probably be deprived of my liberty in consequence of your having done so; since, no doubt, if his Lordship be declared in a dangerous way, an immediate search will be made after me.

Here Mactalla turned aside, evidently to suppress a laugh, which so exasperated Osmond, that with difficulty he forbore ordering him from the room.

The steward soon returned, and Osmond shortly after was conducted to the chamber prepared for him; but though fatigued both in body and mind, the occurrences of the day had made too deep, too dreadful an impression upon him, to permit of his sleeping for a considerable time. In consequence of his restless night, his slumbers were protracted to a late hour in the morning. On awaking he found Mactalla by the bedside. He arose immediately, and as he was dressing, enquired whether he was yet thinking of going to Naples?

'Thinking!' repeated Mactalla, 'I have been there already, and am just come back.'

'Well, well,' cried Osmond, faltering through emotion and looking anxiously in his face.... 'What news of Lord O'Sinister?'

'Ah! he's in a bad way,' answered Mactalla.

'Gracious Heaven!' exclaimed Osmond, in a tone of anguish, and clasping his hands together; 'and the Duke D'Angoumoise....'

'Oh! by the Powers, 'tis all over with him.'

'He has fled, I presume,' cried Osmond, looking still more earnestly in the countenance of Mactalla.

'Faith, you have hit the right nail on the head,' replied the other coolly.

'What will become of him?' exclaimed Osmond, almost distracted about him.

'He'll go to the devil,' returned Mactalla, with the same coolness with which he had just before spoken.

'Good God!' cried Osmond, casting his eyes towards heaven, 'why did I accept his offers of service? why did I employ him in such a business?'

'Aye, why did you indeed?' said Mactalla.... 'Such were the words I made use of to the bankers.... Gentle-

men, says I, why did he employ such a fellow ?....why didn't he entrust me with his money, instead of putting it into the hands of a foreigner....a.....'

'What bankers ?....what money do you mean ?' cried Osmond, wildly staring at Mactalla.

'Read this,' said Mactalla, very composedly taking a letter from his waistcoat pocket, and presenting it to him, 'it will inform you better than I can.'

'A letter,' exclaimed Osmond, as with a trembling hand he took it from him ; 'where did you get it ?'

'I got it at the Duke D'Angoumoise's lodgings....He had the complaisance to leave it there for you.'

Osmond, with increasing emotion, broke the seal, and read as follows.

'SIR,

'That on first hearing of my conduct your rage and indignation will be beyond bounds, I make no doubt ; but equally am I convinced, that as soon as reason resumes her usual empire over you, and you are again enabled to reflect with coolness, the anger and resentment with which it inspires you, will, in a great measure, be overcome by the consideration of the useful lesson it affords you.

'As, without experience, 'tis scarcely possible to pass through life with safety, so the sooner a man acquires what is so requisite to guide him through its shoals and quicksands, the better ; and the more highly he pays for it the greater is the likelihood of its making a deep impression on him.

Instead, therefore, of regretting your acquaintance with me, and the dross it has been the means of depriving you of, you should rather rejoice at the circumstance from the knowledge you have acquired by it. The distrust with which it will doubtless inspire you of mankind in general, the diffidence of your own judgment, (a too presumptuous opinion of which is the great bane of youth,) will, in all probability, save you from still greater depredations.

'But to prove to you that I am not so callous and un

principled as, at first hearing of my conduct you may be led to imagine, I solemnly assure you, that though from having been the victim of deception myself in many instances, I think it but fair to retaliate upon mankind in general, the numerous wrongs I have received at their hands, by taking advantage of them whenever I can....I should have spared you, (so much did your candour and sensibility please me,) but for imperious necessity. As some atonement for abusing the confidence you reposed in me, permit me to inform you, that you need be under no uneasiness with regard to Lord O'Sinister....the pistol I delivered into your hands was not loaded. His motive for wishing you to believe him mortally wounded, is to induce you to quit Naples, which he has some powerful reasons, best known to himself, for wishing you to leave....His acquaintance and mine commenced some years back, and was renewed on our unexpectedly meeting a few days since....After what I have said, it can scarcely be necessary to add, that it was at his instigation I threw myself in your way, for the purpose of endeavouring to involve you in some difficulty, which should oblige you to comply with his wishes....visited you in prison, and afterwards prevailed upon you to meet him in a hostile manner.

* I shall intrude no further on your time, than merely to say, that should circumstances ever permit, I shall, most assuredly, return you the money I have now deprived you of, and that, but for your own credulity, you never would have sustained such a loss. In future, admit no stranger to your confidence....to look with an eye of suspicion on all....to believe that every man you meet is a villain, watching, like a tyger with extended talons, for a favourable opportunity of springing on his prey, is the only way of travelling with safety through this bad world; do this, and you may defy the very devil himself, which is Lord O'Sinister. Accept the assurance of my high consideration; and amongst your friends, be assured you have not one who more truly estimates your worth than

THE DUKE D'ANGOUMOISE.*

'What a character!' exclaimed Osmond, letting the letter drop from his hand.

'He's a complete, big villain,' cried Mactalla, stooping to pick it up.

'A villain, indeed!' echoed Osmond, as he walked about the room, in an agitation impossible to be described.

'That he is,' rejoined the other, 'to run away with the hundred pounds you intended for me when you died.'

'Don't mention that, 'tis nothing to the rest,' cried Osmond, indignantly waving his hand.

'No, to be sure, I know 'tis nothing compared to eight hundred pounds,' replied Mactalla: then after a pause...

'But I am not in the least surprised at what has happened, for I saw by Monsieur's phiz that he was a sly dog and always disliked him as much as I do the rest of the French fellows. By St. Benedict, when I was at Paris I was often tempted to give some of them a good kicking.... There you'd see a fellow bowing and scraping to you, and grinning full in your face, as if he was your most humble servant; and the next instant catch him winking at another, as much as to say he had humbugged you. The Marchesa Morati had a fellow of this kind, and one day he took it into his head to make game of me, as he thought, behind my back; but it happened to be before my face.... a few gentle kicks however, made Mr. Friseur change his tone, and gallop off faster than he came.'

'Pray,' demanded Osmond, suddenly and angrily, 'what induced you to sport with my feelings, by telling me Lord O'Sinister was in a bad way?'

Mactalla looked earnestly at him for a moment.... 'I merely meant, Signor,' replied he, 'that he was in a bad way with regard to his soul.'

'And the bankers,' added Osmond.

'Why, that on hearing the Duke D'Angoumoise had quitted his lodgings, I repaired to them, in hopes of saving your money; but it was too late; he had returned the order you received from them on England, and got your hard cash in exchange for it.'

‘What deliberate villany!’ cried Osmond, with uplifted hands.

‘Yes, yes, deliberate enough,’ said Mactalla; ‘he was sure of his game, so did every thing quietly and coolly.... I wish to the Lord I had been at his elbow, when he was sliding into his pocket the hundred pounds I was to have got after your death.’

‘Psha!’ returned Osmond, impatiently, ‘let me hear no more of that; in some way or other, I shall endeavour to reward you for your services.’

‘O! if it comes to that, hang the dirty money, say I.... by the Powers, Ned Mactalla values money as little as any lord in the kingdom.’

The steward now made his appearance to enquire after Osmond’s health, and whether he was yet disposed for breakfast?.... Osmond, for form’s sake, replying to this question in the affirmative, (the French Duke’s letter having deprived him at the moment of all appetite,) was ushered to an elegant saloon, where the morning repast was prepared for him, and at which the steward would attend. Disturbed and perplexed, so that to make an effort to enter into conversation was painful in the extreme, Osmond would gladly have dispensed with his attendance; but finding he could not prevent this without giving offence, he forced himself to enter into discourse with him, in the course of which he learnt, that besides the present villa, the Duke D’Amalfi had several others, still more splendid and beautiful, to which, whenever state affairs would allow of his leaving the metropolis, he was wont to repair with select parties. Soon after breakfast the steward withdrew, having previously, however, requested Osmond not to think yet awhile of returning to Naples.... a request which Osmond had no hesitation in promising to comply with, as, in the present state of his mind, the idea of entering into any thing like a busy scene was insupportable to him. Left to himself, his thoughts immediately reverted to the conduct of Lord O’Sinister and the French Duke: for that of the former he could assign no cause whatever; it appeared to him as inexplicable as vile.... for the latter, the letter which had disclosed it had fully explained the motives to which it was owing....

enemy of every man.'

His passion by degrees subsiding, during the fury of which, he had meditated pursuing the D'Angoumoise, and bringing him to the punishment he deserved, he finally decided, after a little deliberation, relinquishing this intention, and leaving him to the punishing hand of Heaven: reflection convincing him, that he could not divulge his baseness without implicating O'Sinister, whose conduct the consideration of the obligations he believed his family owed him, rendered him unwilling to expose to public censure.

His meditations were broken in upon by the servant coming to dress his arm....He spoke favourably of the wound, and also of the wounds of the stranger. On his retirement, he was about repairing to a beautiful garden which the saloon opened, when Mactalla abruptly entered the apartment, and stopt him.

'By St. Benedict, Signor,' cried he, almost out of breath, 'but the old gentleman, whose life you have been instrumental in saving, has become (in spite of everything) in the house) a walking ghost. On regaining his collection, and learning the means by which he had been brought hither, I was called, at his particular request, the purpose of letting him know to whom he was in

Mactalla obeyed. On their reaching the gallery he withdrew, and Osmond advancing down it, found the stranger on a couch at the further end. He seemed to be upwards of sixty, and what with the paleness and languor which his wounds had occasioned, the grey locks that thinly shaded his forehead, and a look of deep melancholy, which seemed to say it was something more than the hand of time that had planted wrinkles there, and bent his noble form, appeared altogether one of the most interesting objects he had ever seen.

On Osmond's drawing near him, he attempted to rise but was prevented by Osmond's hurrying forward, and gently laying hold of his arm.....'My preserver!' he then exclaimed in a broken voice, and fastening his eyes with a kind of wild earnestness upon his countenance....'My.....' his bosom heaved with convulsive sobs, and hastily averting his head, he burst into tears.



CHAP. XV.

'Then such deep sighs heav'd from his woeful heart,
As if his sorrowful soul
Had crack'd the strings of life, and burst away.'

Lxx.

'MY dear Sir,' said Osmond, in a soothing accent, and seating himself beside him, not a little shocked at his emotion, 'pray endeavour to compose yourself; recollect the weak state you are at present in, and do not give way to feelings that cannot fail of injuring you. Allow me to assist you to your chamber, and I will remain there as long as you please.'

'Oh, from thee....from thee this consideration for me!' cried the agitated invalid, smiting his bosom, elevating his eyes towards heaven: then, after a pause, turning them again upon Osmond, 'be not uneasy,' he added; 'my present feelings will not injure me, for they are the delicious offspring of gratitude....gratitude for what, but

testable wretch !' he exclaimed, as he reperused this letter, 'thy advice is not less odious than thy conduct. Thou wouldst, if thou couldst, corrupt as well as deceive ; but never, I trust, will that suspicion thou counselest me to harbour, find admission to my breast...that suspicion which is the certain precursor of guilt ; for he who imagines every man his enemy, will naturally become the enemy of every man.'

His passion by degrees subsiding, during the first paroxysm of which, he had meditated pursuing the Duke D'Angoumoise, and bringing him to the punishment he merited, he finally decided, after a little deliberation, on relinquishing this intention, and leaving him to the avenging hand of Heaven : reflection convincing him, that he could not divulge his baseness without implicating Lord O'Sinister, whose conduct the consideration of the obligations he believed his family owed him, rendered him unwilling to expose to public censure.

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'Good Heavens' exclaimed Osmond, 'surely he had been informed, that to see me, it was not requisite for him to rise.'

'So he was, Signor ; but he would not be persuaded to the contrary, and is now in a gallery adjoining his chamber ; nor will he be laid again (that is, in bed, I mean) till he has seen you.'

'Conduct me instantly to him,' said Osmond, '*his rashness may prove fatal to him.*'

Mactalla obeyed. On their reaching the gallery he withdrew, and Osmond advancing down it, found the anger on a couch at the further end. He seemed to upwards of sixty, and what with the paleness and languor which his wounds had occasioned, the grey locks that thinly shaded his forehead, and a look of deep melancholy, which seemed to say it was something more in the hand of time that had planted wrinkles there, he bent his noble form, appeared altogether one of the most interesting objects he had ever seen.

On Osmond's drawing near him, he attempted to rise but was prevented by Osmond's hurrying forward, and gently laying hold of his arm.....'My preserver!' he then exclaimed in a broken voice, and fastening his eyes with a kind of wild earnestness upon his countenance....'My.....' his bosom heaved with convulsive sobs, and hastily averting his head, he burst into tears.



CHAP. XV.

* Then such deep sighs heav'd from his woeful heart,
As if his sorrowful soul
Had crack'd the strings of life, and burst away.'

LXX.

'MY dear Sir,' said Osmond, in a soothing accent, and seating himself beside him, not a little shocked at his emotion, 'pray endeavour to compose yourself; recollect the weak state you are at present in, and do not give way to feelings that cannot fail of injuring you. Allow me to assist you to your chamber, and I will remain there as long as you please.'

'Oh, from thee....from thee this consideration for me!' cried the agitated invalid, smiting his bosom, elevating his eyes towards heaven: then, after a pause, turning them again upon Osmond, 'be not uneasy,' he added; 'my present feelings will not injure me, for they are the delicious offspring of gratitude....gratitude for what, but

spread his countenance, his eyes closed, and he fainted in the arms of Osmond.

Shocked beyond expression, Osmond gently laid him upon the couch, and hastened to procure assistance for him. He was carried to his bed, and immediately undressed; but a length of time elapsed ere he shewed any symptoms of returning animation. On reviving it was evident to all that his senses were deranged. Osmond requested the surgeon might directly be sent for, and then withdrew from the chamber to the garden, in hopes the air would remove the languor and depression he experienced.

The villa was seated on a lofty promontory, embosomed in woods, and commanding an extensive view of the bay and the adjacent country. In another frame of mind, and Osmond would have been transported even to enthusiasm by the richly diversified prospects it overlooked; but now his eye roved almost unconsciously over the picturesque scenery, so much were his thoughts engrossed by recent occurrences....the cruel enmity of Lord O'Sinister, the perfidy of the Frenchman, and the strange conduct of the old gentleman. That the senses of the latter had been disordered from the very commencement of their conversation, or else that he had, by some look or expression, awakened some agonizing remembrances in his bosom, he could not help imagining. It struck him, from his broken sentences, that he was some obdurate parent, who too late had become contrite for his cruelty to his offspring...too late perceived....

* That revenge, though sweet at first, bitter ere long, back on itself recoils.*

His reflections were interrupted by the surgeon, who as soon as he had visited the unfortunate stranger, came to inform him what he thought of his patient. He pronounced him at present in a high fever, evidently brought on by violent agitation, the least renewal of which could not fail, he asserted of proving fatal to him.

This information made Osmond bitterly deplore having suffered himself to be prevailed on to converse so long with him. In the midst of his regrets on the sub-

ject, he was joined by the steward, who came to tell him that the old gentleman was again calling for him, and insisting on another interview.

'Then to put an end to all further importunity on that head,' said Osmond, 'I will immediately quit the villa, since after hearing the surgeon's report of his case, I should conceive myself accessory to his death, if I at present complied with his wishes.'

He then, in case the unhappy invalid should need pecuniary assistance on recovering, gave his written address to the steward, with an injunction to deliver it to him as soon as he got better. He also having thanked the good man for the kind attention which he had experienced at his hands, and which he assured him he should mention to his Lord, the Duke D'Amalfi, in the terms it merited, requested him to have the goodness to send Mactalla to him.

He immediately withdrew for the purpose, but returned in a few minutes.....' Your servant is not at present within, Signor,' said he, 'but I have dispatched a messenger for him.'

'What can possibly have taken him hence?' asked Osmond.

'What, I make no doubt, will excuse his absence to you, Signor....love!' cried the steward, smiling; 'the pretty granddaughter of old Guiseppe, the shepherd, who directed you hither last night, has quite smitten him, and he has hied him to her cottage, to tell her, I suppose, of her conquest.'

'Foolish fellow,' said Osmond; 'he should consider, ere he suffers himself to fall in love, or make love, whether his situation will admit of his marrying, whether.....'

Certain recollections stopped all further censure on poor Mactalla, and crimsoned his cheeks with blushes, for animadverting on what he had himself been guilty of....' Ah,' thought he, as he turned aside to conceal from the steward the confusion which the reflection gave rise to, 'how apt are we all to forget our own errors; how carefully should we review our own conduct, ere we permit ourselves to censure that of others.'

Mactalla quickly appeared, and was ordered by his master to procure him either a carriage or horses immediately to return to Naples, an order which he received with a deep sigh. In the course of half an hour he returned to say that a chaise was at the door, and a horse for himself.

‘Then get yourself ready to depart directly.’

‘Ready, Signor!’ Mactalla repeated, in an accent expressive of surprise; ‘I am ready now.’

‘Why surely you cannot think of riding with one boot and a slipper on,’ said Osmond, pointing, as he spoke, to the legs of Mactalla.

‘I have got a wound,’ returned Mactalla, sighing grievously as he stooped down to examine them, ‘and that’s the reason, I suppose, why I forgot the other boot; but I’ll get it on in a minute,’ and he was hurrying from the room, when Osmond concluding the wound he spoke of was in his leg, caught him by the arm.

‘No, no, my friend,’ cried he, ‘God forbid that I could be capable of consciously letting any one put themselves to pain on my account; you shall dismiss the horse, and ride in the carriage with me to Naples.’

Mactalla cast a look full of gratitude on his master; his eyes swam in tears, and for an instant he appeared unable to speak; then heaving a deep sigh.... ‘I fancy, Signor,’ said he, ‘I may venture on horseback, for my wound is here,’ laying his hand on his heart.

‘Oh, now I understand you,’ returned Osmond laughing; ‘yes, yes, since your wound is there, you may, as you say, venture on horseback, so hasten to put on your boot; and here,’ drawing forth his purse, ‘take this money, and distribute it, at your own discretion amongst the servants.’

Mactalla retired, but in a few minutes returned, saying he was ready to depart. Osmond was attended to the carriage by the steward, whom he again thanked for the civility and kindness he had experienced from him, and reminded of the paper he had entrusted to his care for the unhappy stranger.

As soon as he found himself again in possession of his apartments at the hotel, he sat down to transcribe the

French Duke's letter, for the purpose of sending a copy of it to Lord O'Sinister, the idea of letting his Lordship suppose he had completely imposed upon him being insupportable. Besides, he flattered himself revealing to him his knowledge of his villany would be a means of preventing any further repetition of it, by inducing him to believe that henceforward he should find him on his guard.

The next day he received a summons to the Duke D' Amalfi, with whom he had a long interview, and was fully instructed in the duties of the situation his Excellency had appointed him to. He acquainted his Excellency with his having been indebted to the hospitality of his domestics, but carefully avoided all such particulars of his recent adventure as could create a suspicion of the loss he had sustained, or the baseness of Lord O'Sinister. The first he was unwilling to let his Excellency know, lest he should conceive the divulgement owing to interested motives, and the second for reasons already mentioned.

From this period he became a frequent visitor at the Amalfi palace, and thus had opportunities of acquiring many elegant and agreeable acquaintances; he had besides quite as much leisure as he could desire, in consequence of his situation being almost a sinecure, for the pursuit of the studies he delighted in, and excursions to all the celebrated places about Naples, so gratifying to a person of classic taste and vivid imagination. In short, at this period his fortunes again began to assume a smiling aspect, and but for certain recollections and considerations, he might have been pronounced in a happy, and of course an enviable situation. He could not forget the fair Cordelia, and he feared he should no more behold her, at least till too late for the kind intentions of her mother respecting them to be realized.

Three weeks passed pleasantly away without any thing occurring worthy of notice, during which he sent several times to enquire after the health of the wounded stranger, whom he at length had the satisfaction of hearing pronounced out of danger, but still in so weak a state as to

be interdicted seeing any one, but those whose attendance upon him was absolutely requisite.

While Osmond was thus agreeably spending his time, Mactalla was not idle. He formed many acquaintances amongst the great men of great men, in the number of which was Mr. Jenkins, the confidant and prime agent in all matters of villany of Lord O'Sinister. This honourable gentleman had latterly become extremely jealous of a needy adventurer, styling himself a German Count, though his ignorance and audacity evidently betrayed him of low origin, whom Lord O'Sinister, since his rival at Naples, had taken into his confidence, and at a good course pay, to the great diminution of his, Mr. Jenkins's emoluments. After devising many schemes to ruin him with his employer, but not one of which succeeded at length hit upon one, which could not but answer the thought; this was to betray to Mactalla a plot which had concerted against Osmond, and thus cause its execution, in such a manner as should lead the people to believe it entirely owing to the mismanagement of the German, and accordingly induce him to dismiss him from his service.

In pursuance of this resolution, he informed Mactalla that Lord O'Sinister, finding he could not banish Osmond from Naples, of his motives for desiring to do so, which he pleaded ignorance, had come to a determination of attempting his life, by means of the German Count, who, in order to obtain an opportunity of doing it in such a way as should prevent his being involved in any disagreeable consequences, had been instructed to seek him out, for the purpose of fastening a quarrel upon him.

'Having in vain, however, for some time past sought him at the different public places he was known to frequent,' pursued Jenkins, 'it has at length been settled that the Count, as he styles himself, (though I am convinced he has no more right to call himself so than you or I have) should write to him immediately, advising him of having mentioned his name in a disrespectful manner, of which his having done so a man is al-

provided to swear, and demanding satisfaction for the same. Neither denial nor remonstrance on the subject are to be attended to; a duel they are determined to provoke; and the Count's second is to play your master the same trick with regard to the pistols, which the French Duke did.'

'Is the person of my master,' asked Mactalla, whose countenance underwent various contortions, while listening to Jenkins, 'known to the German Count, or the fellow he has got to bear evidence for him?'

'No,' replied Jenkins, 'tis utterly unknown to them; the Count was attended to the different places in which he sought him by Lord O'Sinister in disguise.'

'His Lordship, I suppose, thought you too conscientious to employ you in this pretty business,' said Mactalla, in rather an ironical tone, and viewing Mr. Jenkins.

'I only know,' returned Jenkins, 'that like many other people in the world, he thinks more highly of new favourites than he does of old ones. The German is every thing with him now; but I am mistaken if I have not done the rascal's business for him....yes, I am convinced the failure of the scheme now in agitation against your master will occasion his dismissal, as my Lord will doubtless attribute it to his bungling; but remember, my dear friend, in putting your master up to their villany, you take care not to involve me in any scrape.'

Mactalla nodded significantly, and then desired to know at what time the letter he had spoken of might be expected?

'In the course of the ensuing morning,' Jenkins replied.

Mactalla again nodded, and they soon after separated, but not without Jenkins requesting to be timely apprised of his master's plans with respect to the German, that he might have the satisfaction of witnessing his disappointment and disgrace.

The rage and indignation of Mactalla at the nefarious plot contrived against his master were so great, that on parting with Mr. Jenkins, he felt strongly tempted to repair to a magistrate, disclose the whole affair to him, and have Lord O'Sinister and his vile agents taken up,

as his intended murderers. When he came to reflect, however, on the consummate art of which his Lordship was possessed, the weight which his rank and fortune would give to whatever he said, and the little probability there was of Jenkins being prevailed on to bear evidence against him, he abandoned this intention, as one more likely to injure than to serve his master. Yet to let his Lordship and his hirelings escape punishment was not to be thought of. After much deliberation on the subject, he at length, having fully persuaded himself that he never could work upon his master to do what he wished on the present occasion, formed the resolution of taking the affair entirely into his own hands, and of course concealing it from him.... 'I will, I will,' he cried, capering about as the idea struck him; 'I'll manage it entirely myself, for he's by half too quiet for such big rogues; I'll try if I can't cure them of playing any more tricks upon travellers.'

He accordingly, in pursuance of this resolution, kept a look-out for the expected letter, which at an early hour the ensuing morning he received from the hands of a waiter. He directly withdrew with it to his own chamber, where having perused it, he replied to it in the name of his master, appointing the Count, who in his billet merely expressed a wish for a private conference with Osmond, to call upon him at one o'clock, an hour at which he knew his master would be engaged with the Duke D'Amalfi.

As soon as Osmond had set out for his Excellency's, Mactalla attired himself in a suit of his clothes, and then repaired to the drawing-room, to await the coming of his expected visitor. The interval of expectation was chiefly employed by him in contemplating his figure in the glass, and admiring the fashionable air his master's cloaths had given him.... 'By St. Benedict,' cried he, as he gazed upon himself, 'but it's a true saying, that fine feathers make fine birds; if I hadn't known who my father was, I should certainly have passed for a gentleman in my own eyes now.'

The Count was punctual to his appointment; he was ushered into the drawing-room by a lad whom Mactalla

had engaged, and properly instructed for the occasion. After the usual salutations were over....' I have waited upon you, Sir,' said the Count, in a gruff tone, and with a frowning aspect, 'about a very unpleasant business.'

'I am sorry to hear that,' replied Mactalla coolly.

'Yes, Sir, upon an affair,' and the German tried to look important, 'which I am afraid will not end but with the sacrifice of one....it may be both our lives.'

'Then we are likely to have tight work of it,' observed Mactalla.

'Come, come, Sir, this light manner of speaking is unbecoming the affair in hand, and can answer no other end than to render still more severe the chastisement you have provoked from me.'

'For what, will you be kind enough to tell me?' said Mactalla.

'For what!' repeated the German; 'do you then pretend to be ignorant of the injury you have done me, by publicly traducing my character, Sir?'

'And pray who may have told you I did that?' asked Mactalla, with a smile, and the most perfect coolness.

'Who! I have my witness at hand, Sir,' and as he spoke he hastily advanced to the door, and gave admission to a fellow who had accompanied him to the hotel....

'This, Sir,' cried he, pointing to the ruffian, as he advanced into the room, for such both the business he had come upon, and his appearance, proclaimed him to be, 'is the gentleman, a gentleman I must premise to you of the strictest honour and veracity, who heard you the other evening, in a public room, call me a gambler and a swindler.'

'Well, if he had,' said Mactalla, 'I dare say he'd have heard what he couldn't have given the lie to.'

'What, this to my face!' thundered out the German; 'but you shall pay dearly for thus aggravating the insult you have offered me; yes, yes, you shall know that the Count Schwarten Gluckstade Languesala is not a person to be offended with impunity; if you don't agree to give me the satisfaction a gentleman has a right to insist upon, on such an occasion, I'll post you for a coward, and inflict manual chastisement upon you, wherever and when-

ever I meet you ; yes, I'll teach you what it is,' pacing the room as he spoke, in a seeming rage, 'to offend a man of honour....I'll.....'

'Softly, softly,' interrupted Mactalla, 'what signifies putting yourself into such a passion ? can't you take pattern by me, man ? Don't you see how easy I am ? Whenever I am angry, I always make it a point to keep myself cool, that I may be able to do what I wish with pleasure to myself and friends. From what you have said I suppose I am to understand that you wish for an opportunity of driving a bullet through my body ?'

'Just so, Sir....just so,' replied the German.

'And why not say so in a quiet civil way ?' said Mactalla ; 'one word would just have done as well as a hundred.'

'Sir, wrongs like mine are enough to make any man speak.'

'Aye, and fight too, it should seem,' rejoined Mactalla....'And so Mr. what's your name,' turning to the Count's accomplice, 'you positively say you heard me the other night, abusing your good friend here, Count.... Count....oh ! by the Powers, his godfathers and god-mothers gave him too many names for me to remember them.'

'I'll swear it,' returned the ruffian.

'Oh, you need not give yourself the trouble,' cried Mactalla, coolly ; 'your word will be believed as readily as your oath at any time, I am sure.'

'Yes, Sir,' vociferated the German, 'as sure as your name is Munro, he heard you traduce my character ; so no more trifling, but say at once, will you give me the satisfaction I require for the injury ?'

Only point out a snug private place to meet you in,' said Mactalla, and I am your man.'

The Count turned to his companion, and after a little consultation, a lonely field, at a little distance from the city, was the place appointed for Mactalla to meet him in, in the course of an hour.

'And as to seconds,' continued the Count, 'we may as well dispense with the attendance of all but this gentleman,' glancing at his friend.

Mactalla nodded, as if perfectly satisfied with this arrangement; and the Count having previously charged him to be punctual, withdrew with his companion.

The instant they were gone, Mactalla took off his master's clothes, and enveloped himself in a great-coat, beneath which he concealed a large oak stick he had purchased for the occasion. With the lad then already mentioned, driving before him a mule furnished with two large panniers, he proceeded to the place of appointment. Within a few yards of it he caused the lad to retire with the mule behind a large clump of trees, and unaccompanied advanced towards the Count, who with his second had preceded him to the ground.

He very quietly suffered all the usual preparations for a duel to be made; but on the pretended second presenting him with a pistol, he in return laid him prostrate at his feet, with a blow of his cudgel, and then rushing upon the Count, seized him by the collar, and dashed the other pistol from his grasp.

'What's this for....what's this for?' roared out the struggling Count, in a terrified accent, and with the ghastliness of cowardice and conscious guilt.

'Merely to shew you,' returned Mactalla, 'how the boys in the county of Cork treat such big blackguards as you are.'

So saying, he fell upon the German just as if it was a sack of corn he had to thrash, between every stroke he laid upon him exclaiming....'This is the way, this is the way,' to the unutterable amusement of Mr. Jenkins, who having called upon him at the hotel, and heard what was about taking place, had followed his steps, for the purpose of witnessing the disgrace and disappointment of his rival with Lord O'Sinister.

The unfortunate German danced, capered, roared, supplicated, and finally protested he would have justice.

'Be easy man, be easy,' cried Mactalla, 'aint I administering justice as fast as I can? you would have done me an injury, and I in return am inflicting a little gentle chastisement upon you, and if this is not justice, the devil is in't.'

The Count's companion, who had merely received a

blow across the shoulders, quickly recovered his legs ; but perceiving Jenkins, and concluding he was come to the assistance of Mactalla, he took to his heels.

Mactalla at length pretty well satisfied with the flagellation he had bestowed on the Count, threw him on the ground, and pulling some cords from his pocket, began tying his hands and legs. While doing this....‘ Aye, aye, Mr. Count,’ he cried, ‘ by the Powers, but I think you’ll be more careful for the future how you get yourself into the hands of my countrymen ; you’ll not be in a hurry again, I think, to hire yourself to blow out the brains of an innocent man. By St. Benedict, I’d give all I am likely to be worth these ten years, to have an opportunity of giving just such another dressing to the old rascal who employed you ; but his turn will come yet....sometime or other he’ll meet with his deserts.’

Having finished binding the Count, he called to the lad to lead forward the mule, which being done, he seated Count Schwertan Gluckstade Languesala in one of the panniers, to the great delight of Mr. Jenkins, who clapping him on the shoulder, exclaimed in an exulting tone....‘ By the Powers, as you say yourself, my dear friend, but you have done the business.’

‘ Neatly, I think,’ cried Mactalla, smiling and rubbing his hands, ‘ neatly ; but it’s not quite finished yet.’

‘ No ! why what remains to be done ?’

‘ Why, to balance the Count with as great a scoundrel as himself,’ and as he spoke he closed with Mr. Jenkins, tripped up his heels in a moment, and producing some more cord, began binding him as he had done the Count.

‘ Are you mad, are you mad ?’ roared out Jenkins.

‘ No, neither so mad nor so stupid, as not to know that you played the part of second to that abominable old villain, your master, when he attempted the life of mine, and that with all your heart you would have entered into this second plot against him, had you been required. Knowing this, you may therefore bless your stars that I let you off so easily ; if you have any regard for your back, I advise you to let me know in time, any roguish schemes that may be formed against him.’

Then, in spite of all his entreaties, and struggles, he

placed him in the other pannier, and ordered the lad to drive forward the mule.

Thus did Mactalla enter Naples, and proceed to the house of Lord O'Sinister, in the Largo Castilio. He knocked at the door in the true style of a precursor of a carriage, in consequence of which the porter fully expected an equipage was approaching; but not perceiving one, he, after staring a few minutes in silence at Mactalla, enquired, in rather an angry tone, what had made him knock in such a manner?

'Are you blind,' asked Mactalla, 'that you don't see your master's friends?'

'Where?' demanded the porter, as did also several other servants, who were lounging about the hall.

'Why, yonder,' replied Mactalla, pointing to the mule, 'in that new-fashioned carriage.'

The bursts of laughter which issued from the servants, at the sight he thus presented to their view....a sight rendered doubly delectable by the hatred they bore Mr. Jenkins and the Count, quickly drew the rest of the domestics to the door, who sharing in their mirth, the uproar became so great as to attract Lord O'Sinister to a balcony, to learn the occasion of it. Mactalla no sooner espied his Lordship, than retreating a little way from the door, so as to command a good view of him, he took off his hat and made him a profound reverence; after which he smiled significantly in his face, and pointed with his thumb over his shoulder to the mule. Then turning round, with the assistance of the boy, he took off the panniers, and, to use his own words, quietly and coolly emptied their contents upon the flags; after which he again saluted his Lordship, with the same air of ironical respect he had before done, and retired, followed by the shouts and acclamations of the servants, and, we may also believe, the anathemas of his Lordship.

On his return to the hotel, he found his master arrived before him, and heard that he had been enquiring for him....'I can't help it,' cried he, in reply to the waiter, who informed him he did not appear pleased at finding him absent; 'a man can't be here, and every where, at once.'

'What's the matter?' asked Osmond, who had overheard these words, as he entered the room.

'Matter!....matter enough have I had upon my hands this blessed day, or I wonder at it,' returned he....'I thank the Powers, but that Count what-do-you-call-him is a stout strong fellow....if he had been born in England or Ireland, where he'd have got a little courage from the example of others, I shouldn't have found it quite so easy a matter to frounce him as I did; but as it was, I think I have trimmed his jacket neatly for him....Ha ha, Mactalla! Backslide Long-as-a-sallet....that you are, long as twenty of them, you'll not be in a hurry again, I think, to undertake such a barbarous business.'

'What do you mean?' demanded Osmond with quickness, and turning round to survey him.

'Oh! nothing more than that... that old sinner in the square yonder hasn't left off his tricks yet.'

'Explain yourself,' said Osmond, evidently agitated.

'That I will,' replied Mactalla. He accordingly related to Osmond all that had lately occurred.

Unspeakable was the amazement and indignation of Osmond, at the particulars he communicated to him. The silence which he had hitherto maintained with regard to Lord O'Sinister's conduct towards him, he could no longer think of preserving; it seemed to him that safety demanded his being explicit on the subject. He accordingly resolved on acquainting the Duke D'Ambray with the whole of it, and requesting his interference with his Lordship.

His Excellency had just set off for a villa some miles distant from Naples, with a large party of friends, and thither Osmond determined to follow him immediately, as indeed he had been invited to do. A chaise was accordingly sent for, and in the course of an hour after his return from the field of battle, both Mr. Mactalla and his master were on their way to the residence of his Excellency. This villa, like the one at which they had received succour for the wounded stranger, was rich in natural and artificial beauties; the house itself, built with an airy lightness suitable to the climate, was a model of elegant architecture. A double flight of marble stairs

turned on either side with antique statues, led to a vestibule, supported by several beautiful Corinthian pillars, and opening into a spacious saloon enlightened by a dome of richly-stained glass, and decorated with all that painting and sculpture could do for its embellishment. When the doors leading from this to the sitting-rooms, and again the outer ones that opened from these apartments into different parts of the grounds, were all thrown open, a scene of grandeur, beauty, and variety, was presented to the view, that defied description.

A classic taste was every where apparent in the disposition of the grounds: a pleasing solemnity prevailed in front of the edifice; the lawn on which it stood was shadowed with noble cedars; and over a winding stream adjoining this, and half shrouded from view by clustering thickets, a rude bridge was thrown, bespread with moss and ivy; and ending in the arched entrance of a time-ruck temple, the ruins of which, scattered amidst the deep masses of shade that covered the steep banks at this side, gave a picturesque effect to the whole. At the rear of the house, spacious walks extended, margined with parterres of the choicest flowers, and divided by groves of orange trees, and thickets of myrtle and roses; from hence was caught a distant view of the glittering bays of Naples, backed by ranges of mountains gradually fading into the air, and o'ertopped by Mount Vesuvius, casting up fire and smoke; and veiling at intervals the bright azure of the cloudless skies, while through the luxuriant foliage of the elevated woods, the eye looked down upon the blue waters of the bay, enlivened by the white sails of innumerable vessels, and on its matchless shores.

At this delightful retreat, at which Osmond arrived just as its beauties were beginning to be veiled by the shades of twilight, he found a large party assembled, and busy in preparing for a masquerade, that was to be given that night. As soon as he had paid his compliments to the Duke, who professed himself very agreeably surprised by his having so speedily followed him from Naples, Osmond not having said any thing when they parted, calculated to make his Excellency imagine such was his inten-

tion, he retired to change his dress, and equip himself for the approaching entertainment, which he did by merely assuming a mask and domino; but neither the novelty of the scene, (it being the first time he had ever been at an entertainment of the kind,) the magnificence that every where met his view, the harmonious strains that floated through the apartments, nor the gaiety of the crowd that filled them, could divert the uneasiness that preyed upon him, or for an instant dissipate the corroding reflections the unaccountable conduct of Lord O'Sinister had excited. At length, fatigued with a scene, in the pleasures of which he could not participate, he withdrew to the garden, which was partially illuminated. The lighted alleys, which were nearly as crowded as the room, he soon forsook for a distant walk bordered with beautiful groves, and where no other light prevailed than the soft shadowy light shed by the moon, now slowly rising above the wooded hills, nor any sound save the soft sighing of the zephyrs, and the murmuring of waters.

To the imposing tranquillity of this scene, the irritation of Osmond's feelings gradually yielded. In a not unpleasant reverie, he wandered on till he came to the termination of the walk, which gradually expanded, and ended in a large grass plat, of oval form, in the centre of which was a light circular temple of white marble, at each side of which played a beautiful fountain. Osmond seated himself in the temple, and gazed around him with the liveliest admiration. The grass plat was margined with the most delicious shrubs, and round the spacious walk that encompassed it the groves compleatly swept, and uniting in the rear, formed deep shades, now partially silvered by the moon; but what particularly attracted his regard was, the beauty of the statues that decorated the fountains. After sitting some time to enjoy the profound stillness that reigned in this part of the garden, and the delightful freshness of the air, rendered cool by the ascending waters, he arose for the purpose of examining them. As he walked round one of the fountains, he suddenly became motionless with admiration, at the sight of a figure seated on the edge of the white marble basin, the head averted, and representing a female in an

attitude of the most profound melancholy....The softness of the drapery, the exquisite manner in which the symmetry of the form was revealed through it, and the striking pensiveness of the attitude, filled Osmond with no less wonder than admiration. While gazing, as if spell-bound, on this matchless specimen of art, he fancied he heard a deep sigh; he listened attentively, but the sound not being repeated, concluded his ear had deceived him. At last his eye wandered in a different direction: quickly, however, it reverted to the object that had so fascinated it...He started, as it did, for the attitude appeared changed....'But, no, no,' he cried, after gazing for an instant with a kind of fearful wonder on the figure....'no, it cannot be....my senses, bewildered by the various objects that have lately met my view, deceive me....yet no,' he exclaimed, 'for the head now evidently moves.'

He made an effort to seize the figure, as he saw it rising from the fountain; but with a piercing shriek it eluded his grasp, and flew towards the walks up which he had come....He impulsively pursued. The agitation into which the incident had thrown him, made him feel his mask suffocating; he tore it off, and flung it away. In a few minutes he came up with the flying fugitive....he gently seized her robe, and besought her not be alarmed.

'Oh, Heavens!' she instantly exclaimed, in an undertone, and the next moment dropt, apparently fainting, in his arms.

'Good God, of what has my temerity been the cause!' cried Osmond.

He looked wildly round him for assistance, but perceived no one at hand to administer any; and after a little hesitation, resolved on bearing his fair burthen to the temple which he had just occupied. On depositing her there, he took off her mask, in order to let her have the full benefit of the air, and eagerly casting his eyes on her features, beheld those of his lovely Cordelia.

The rapture of this moment seemed to compensate to him for all the pain he had suffered on her account. He pressed her to his bosom....he pronounced her name in

the softest, gentlest accent....he kissed, unconsciously, perhaps, as well as involuntarily, her cheek, pale and cold, at the instant, as the marble of which, but a few minutes before he had imagined her composed. At length she began to shew signs of returning animation....'Where am I?' she exclaimed, in a tremulous tone, as, her eyes opening, she looked wildly about her.

'Safe, safe, my beloved....my Cordelia!' cried the enraptured Osmond, with irrepressible emotion.

'Ah! now I recollect all,' she replied, lifting her eyes to his face as she raised her head from his shoulder....

'Good Heaven, how little did I imagine I should have met you here!'

'And as little,' replied Osmond, 'did I imagine such happiness in store for me. Oh! my..... may I,' he added, in a somewhat timid accent, 'may I again venture to say, my Cordelia, what have I not suffered since we parted! but of this,' and he gently took her hand, 'you must be a judge, when I tell you I despaired of ever meeting you again.'

'Per....perhaps,' in a low and hesitating accent, returned Miss Raymond, making an effort, but a vain one, to withdraw her hand from his, 'it would have been better for both if we never had.'

Osmond started....the chillness of death seemed to fasten on his heart....'Better!' he repeated with difficulty....'better that we had never met again! Oh, Miss Raymond!.... But I will not reproach you....the inequality of our fortunes forbids such a measure.'

'As would justice....as would humanity! did you know the motive which actuated me to say so....Yes, I repeat, since destined to part for ever, it would have been better if we had never met again.'

'To part for ever!' repeated Osmond, clasping his hands.

Miss Raymond for an instant raised her's towards heaven, with a despairing look, and then pressed them on her bosom.

'That this should be the case,' she cried, 'that a lasting separation between us is inevitable, you will not wonder, when I tell you that I am.....'

'Oh, speak!' cried Osmond....'In pity, in compassion,' and he dropt kneeling at her feet on finding her pause, 'declare why we must part....ignorance on such a subject is not endurable.'

'That I am,' resumed Miss Raymond, after pausing a few minutes, during which her face was covered with her handkerchief, 'the.....But see,' she added, with a faint scream, starting up and stretching her arms over the shoulders of Osmond, as he still continued kneeling before her....'see my mother!'

Osmond at these words hastily arose, and half turning, beheld a lady ascending the steps, in whose features, on advancing, he recognized those of Mrs. Raymond. She suddenly stopt, and after surveying him and her daughter alternately for a minute, with the most scrutinizing earnestness, exclaimed, in an accent expressive of astonishment as well as agitation... 'Good Heaven! Mr. Munro here!'

Miss Raymond, in trembling accents, accounted to her for being in the temple, attributing her having quitted the house to her having been overcome by the heat and noise.

'Have you explained to Mr. Munro,' demanded Mrs. Raymond, with evident emotion, 'the.....'

Miss Raymond's eyes fell beneath the enquiring glance of her mother.... 'I intended to have done so,' she said; 'but.....'

'Retire then, my love,' returned her mother, 'and I will take the painful task upon myself.'

Miss Raymond bowed in sign of acquiescence, and advanced to the steps. Osmond involuntarily started forward to hand her down them.... 'Are all my dreams of happiness then come to this?' he cried, in a tone of bitterness, as he presented his hand, or rather gently took her's.... 'After being allowed to entertain such hopes....to indulge in such expectations, must I for ever be compelled to give you up?'

Miss Raymond sighed....she hesitated....she paused on the last step.

'If to know the pain is mutual, which the disappointment of the expectations you allude to occasions, can as-

ford you any consolation, receive that consolation now,' she said, in a low and trembling voice.... 'receive it with my best wishes for your returning happiness.... May.....'

'Mr. Munro,' said Mrs. Raymond, coming forward, and with an impatience in her looks, which proved her anxious to prevent any further conversation between him and her daughter, 'I request your immediate attention.'

Osmond started....sighed....pressed, for an instant, the trembling hand of the lovely Cordelia to his sinking heart, and then reluctantly, most reluctantly, resigning it, reascended the steps to Mrs. Raymond.....A silence of a few minutes ensued....Mrs. Raymond then began.

'Most painful, as I have just said, is the task I have taken upon myself; equal to the happiness I should have derived from realizing the hopes I gave birth to in your bosom, is the anguish I feel at being compelled to destroy them.'

'Compelled?' repeated Osmond, involuntarily, and with reproachful bitterness.... 'Ah, Madam! acknowledge that when you inspired them, you were not so sensible of your daughter's value as you are now.'

'Your surmise is most unjust,' returned Mrs. Raymond with quickness.... 'I solemnly protest, in the sight of Heaven, that the change in my intentions respecting you, is occasioned neither by pecuniary nor ambitious motives, but entirely by your having.....'

'What?' exclaimed Osmond, grasping her hand, scarcely conscious of what he was about, his very soul appearing to hover on his lips.... 'Oh, Madam, in mercy prolong not the tortures of suspense.'

'Raised your hand against the life of her father!' said Mrs. Raymond, finishing the sentence which agitation had interrupted.

'Raised my hand against the life of her father!....the life of Mr. Raymond!' repeated Osmond, aghast, and dropping the hand which he had seized.... 'Great God! who has accused me of such a crime? Tell me, tell me, Madam,' in vehement accents he continued, the paleness of horror giving way to the glow of rage and indignation, 'who the vile calumniator is, that I may force him to confess he has given utterance to a falsehood.'

' Ah ! would to Heaven you could convince me that the accusation was a falsehood....would to Heaven you could convince me that your hand was never raised against Lord O'Sinister.'

' Lord O'Sinister !' repeated Osmond, staring wildly at her....' Lord O'Sinister !' he again uttered, with almost breathless emotion....' But....but,' and he trembled through a prophetic fear, ' Lord O'Sinister and Mr. Raymond are not one.'

' Alas ! too truly.'

Again horror struck, Osmond recoiled a few paces.... ' Gracious heaven !' he inwardly exclaimed, as he leaned his trembling frame against a pillar, ' what a discovery ! His Lordship's motives for wishing to force me from Naples are now explained. But for imposing upon me in the manner he has done....for shrouding himself from my knowledge under a fictitious name, what can have been the cause ? Oh how more successful would he have checked my growing partiality for his daughter, by at once discovering himself to me, than by the measures he adopted for the purpose ; had he at once revealed to me who the fair object of my admiration was, honour and gratitude would have united to oppose my rising passion.'

That Mrs. Raymond, or as she should henceforth be called, Lady O'Sinister, had received an erroneous statement of all that had passed between him and his Lordship, her words implied. As Osmond reflected on this, a faint hope sprung in his mind, that perhaps, if undeceived on the subject, she might again be induced to give countenance to his wishes respecting her daughter....those wishes which she had so contributed to strengthen ; at all events, he deemed it due to his character, to endeavour to clear it from the aspersions which, he made no doubt, had been thrown upon it. He accordingly, having endeavoured to collect his thoughts, so as to be enabled to speak with some degree of composure, again approached her ; scarcely, however, had he commenced his intended vindication, ere she interrupted him.

' 'Tis unnecessary for you, believe me,' she cried ;

‘to enter into any vindication of your conduct; my esteem, my regard for you remain undiminished..... You look astonished at this assertion, wondering, no doubt at my intentions concerning you being changed, since my opinion of you continue the same; but to account for their being so, know that the public in general are so fully persuaded of your having attempted the life of her father, that for me to sanction your union with my daughter, would be to draw upon myself a lasting opprobrium.’

‘And who, who,’ demanded Osmond, indignantly, ‘is the person who has impressed such a belief on the public mind?’

‘A person,’ returned her Ladyship, emphatically, ‘whose rank, fortune, and specious manners, give weight to whatever he asserts. Enquire no further, but allow me to employ the few minutes we can remain together, in explaining to you the situation in which I stand with my Lord, and the motives which actuated me to think of acting contrary to his inclination, in the disposal of his daughter.’

Osmond bowed, to evince his being all attention, and her Ladyship thus proceeded.

‘Lord O’Sinister and I have long been on such terms, as would, some years back, have induced me to consent to, or rather propose a separation, but that I was aware I could not separate myself from him without separating myself also from my daughter; rather, therefore, than forego her society, abandon the sacred duties of a mother, and expose her to the pernicious influence of flattery and corrupt society, I determined on continuing at what I could not help considering my proper post. Innumerable were the mortifications which this determination drew upon me; but for all I have been more than compensated...First, by the consciousness of having done my duty, and secondly, by the affection, tenderness, and virtues of my Cordelia....virtues of which, from the first dawn of reason, she gave the fairest promise. Convinced by sad experience, that the most splendid is not always the happiest station, I have always been more solicitous for my daughter’s union with a man of principle than for-

With your connexions, your character, your principles, I have long been intimately acquainted....what I thought of these, my sanctioning the reality between you and her must better testify than words. I quickly perceived, and resolved on encouraging it, having in my own hands the power of launching into life, in a manner suitable to her birth; and feeling convinced that she could not make a choice more calculated to ensure her happiness, I looked forward to the day of your union with impatience, as to a period in which she would be snatched from the caprices of a tyrannical father, and I restored to domestic felicity....to those social delights to which I had long been a stranger in the house of my husband: in short, I indulged in a thousand exquisite anticipations, which are now all, like the airy fabric of a vision, dissolved, without leaving a wreck behind.'

'Oh, Madam,' in a voice scarce audible, cried Osmond, 'in pity spare me!....Dwell not, dwell not, I conjure you, on the felicity that has been thus torn from my grasp.'

'Pardon me,' said Lady O'Sinister, in a voice almost as broken as his own, and laying a trembling hand on his arm....'To be brief....my Lord conceived a suspicion of my designs respecting you....this suspicion was sufficient to induce him to contrive a pretext for removing me and Miss Athelstone immediately from the scene. We left it under the idea of returning to it in the course of an hour; but instead of allowing this, he took me to a house which had, previously to his coming to Naples, been engaged for him, where he had recourse to pretences that rendered it utterly impossible to have any communication with you. The restriction on his daughter's liberty and mine continued till after your unfortunate rencontre with him.'

'Oh, Madam,' exclaimed Osmond, 'I cannot avoid thinking that affair has either been grossly misrepresented, or cruelly exaggerated to you. The most insulting artifices.....'

'I am perfectly aware of all,' interrupted Lady O'Sinister, 'of the cruel machinations that were practised

against you; but my believing you innocent is to have already said, sufficient, except the world con- sider in that opinion. Were I, in consequence of acquiescing in my own mind, to bestow my daughter on a man I am convinced I should forfeit that esteem which I hitherto retained, though not without many painful sacrifices, my Lord, to try and lighten the enormity of my own conduct, having made it a point to villify my proceeding which compelled me to be rigidly circumspect in all my actions. Hitherto, in consequence of this circumspection, his slanders have gained no credit. But the world is prone to ill-nature; 'tis ever ready to rob you of the applause it bestows. Besides, it judges from appearances, and I therefore make no doubt that in the slightest instance I deviated from propriety, more gave my daughter to the man who is generally believed to have raised his hand against the life of her father, I should unhesitatingly be accused of having played the part of a hypocrite to this period, and remain ever after an object of calumny. That the censure which we are conscious of not deserving, we should disrepute, you may perhaps say; but when you reflect on the humiliations to which the female who slightes the public opinion is exposed, I am persuaded you'll concur with me in thinking that she cannot be too tenacious of



CHAP. XVI.

* He at the news
Heart-struck, with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
That all his senses bound.

MILTON

A DEEP sigh was Osmond's response to this observation of Lady O'Sinister. After a pause.... 'To what is inevitable,' resumed her Lady 'your good sense will, I trust, soon reconcile you... must endeavour to forget.....'

Ah! Madam,' hastily interrupted Osmond, and with something of reproachful bitterness in his voice, 'recollect what the poet says....

'Of all afflictions taught a lover yet,
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget.'

But to indulge recollections that can only agonize, is madness,' returned her Ladyship.... 'Remember, that those to whom much has been given, much will be expected.... from superior sense and a cultivated mind, more than common exertions will be looked for. Come,' said she, tenderly pressing his arm, and looking anxiously in his face, 'let me not part from you under the menacing idea of your yielding to this disappointment.... encourage me to exert yourself.'

'Time, Madam,' said Osmond, respectfully pressing her hand, she rested on his arm, and half averting his face to avoid her's 'time may enable me to overcome what pain it inflicts; but 'tis only time that can.....'

'Oh, would to God,' cried Lady O'Sinister with evidently irrepressible emotion, and clasping his hands between her's.... 'would to God my Lord could be persuaded to render you that justice he owes you.... could be induced to make you the only adequate atonement in his power, for the injuries he has done you, by bestowing his daughter on you.'

Osmond sighed and shook his head despondently, for well was he convinced, might he

'..... Go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main-flood bate his usual height....
As well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb?
As well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make a noise
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven....
As well do any thing most hard,'

hope to induce his Lordship to act in this manner. 'His Lordship's persecuting enmity towards me,' he added, 'forbids my indulging any expectation of the.... Oh! Madam, for this enmity.... for his wishing to conceal himself from my knowledge, can you assign any reason?'

‘To say I could not, would be to utter a falsehood,’ returned her Ladyship, ‘but motives of the most delicate nature enjoin me silence on the subject. Time may unveil much to your knowledge; but let the discoveries you may yet make be what they may, I trust they will never banish from your recollection whose father.... whose husband Lord O’Sinister is.’

‘Good God!’ exclaimed Osmond, in the most violent agitation, ‘what mystery is couched beneath these words?... Explain, explain, Madam, I conjure you, the import of them! You have put me on the rack by what you have said.... Tell me, has Lord O’Sinister done me any greater wrong than I am aware of?’

Lady O’Sinister appeared alarmed and confused by this question.... ‘I repeat,’ returned she, ‘what I have just said, that relative to every part of his conduct not already known to you, my lips are sealed. I have wounded and outraged my feelings, by the explicit manner in which I have already spoken of him; nothing but absolute necessity could have induced me to violate the laws of delicacy and decorum, by mentioning him in such terms. To prevent, however, any unnecessary uneasiness, permit me to assure you, that whatever were the nameless wrongs he meditated, they have been rendered abortive, by that good Providence which still watches over the children of the virtuous man.’

‘Ha!’ exclaimed Osmond, recoiling a few paces at these words, his eyes kindling, his cheeks flushing to crimson, his breathing short, and interrupted by emotion.... ‘The children, said you?... I now begin to develop the mystery.... my sister!’.... He paused.... paused to reflect on the various circumstances, which, as they gradually occurred to his recollection, confirmed his conjecture of his sister’s destruction having been attempted by Lord O’Sinister. The sudden manner in which he had made an offer of his patronage to his father.... his immediately sending him from his family.... the equally sudden way in which Elizabeth, after long eulogizing his Lordship, had ceased speaking of him.... the broken hints, the hatred, the contempt in which Delacour held him.... the vile character which his Lady gave him, all as re-

ewed by Osmond, convinced him that he was not mistaken in this supposition.... 'Yes, yes, the veil is now completely rent away,' he cried, 'and he stands confessed a monster of depravity....yes, I now perceive that the generosity which called forth such warm, such heartfelt acknowledgments, was assumed for the purpose of betraying innocence....that he only affected benevolence, to obtain an opportunity of inflicting wounds, which humanity could not have healed: but he shall not go unpunished. It was not his fault that my sister escaped his snares, and by Heaven he shall experience the punishment he merits, for ever having sought to involve her in them. His real character shall no longer remain unknown; to the infamy, the scorn he merits, he shall immediately be exposed; and oh, may every pang he has given to the bosoms of those I love be doubled in his own; in the horrors of remorse may his nights be spent...his days in vain efforts to elude them; may.....'

'Go on,' interrupted Lady O'Sinister, in a tone of the most reproachful bitterness; 'call down still deeper maledictions on his head; to complete his punishment, pray that he may go childless to his grave.'

Osmond started, and instantly recollected himself. 'Ah, Madam,' he exclaimed, 'surely the severity of that speech was not merited....surely some little allowances should be made for feelings like mine!....yet acknowledge....candidly acknowledge myself in error, for having suffered them to transport me so far in your presence.'

'Be assured I neither wonder at, nor resent their having done so,' replied her Ladyship; 'but though I acknowledge this, I cannot forbear conjuring you to moderate their violence....My Lord has not escaped punishment, believe me, and that too of a severe nature, for the injury he meditated against your sister, and I so unfortunately, by means of an unguarded expression, have betrayed to you; let the knowledge of this, therefore, appease your resentment. To pursue its dictates would be to betray to your father what he at present is happily ignorant of, and thus, in all probability, draw greater evils upon your family, than any they have yet experienced.'

Let me conjure you, therefore to, think no more of what you have so unexpectedly discovered?

‘I will not promise what is impossible,’ answered Osmond, after a silence of some minutes, during which he appeared buried in reflection. ‘My senses must be completely steeped in forgetfulness, ere I can cease to think of what I have heard; but I will promise to leave it to the hand of Heaven, to avenge the wrongs of the injured.’

‘Enough,’ said Lady O’Sinister; ‘that promise completely satisfies me: and now, my dear....dear young friend, we must part; a long interval may elapse ere we meet again; but trust me, neither time nor distance will lessen the regard I entertain for you....nothing but your dereliction from the virtues which made me adopt the idea of giving you the treasure of my life can diminish it. To hear of your happiness, to be instrumental to it, will add to mine....Of the liberal patron you have found in the Duke D’Amalfi, I am not ignorant; but should you in process of time find a continuance in this country unpleasant....should you, in short, require another friend, I trust, instead of seeking a new one, you will apply to your old one.’

‘Oh, Madam,’ cried the greatly agitated Osmond, almost convulsively grasping the hand which, as she uttered the last words, she extended to him, ‘this is a cruel kindness....since doomed to lose the pleasure resulting from your society, aggravate not the pangs of that doom, by giving me still greater reason to regard you.’

‘Adieu, then,’ returned her Ladyship and for an instant she pressed with fervour his hand between hers; ‘may Heaven bless and for ever prosper you; never, never,’ shall I cease considering you as my son....never, never,’ she repeated, but in an under and broken voice, ‘shall I cease lamenting your not being so in reality.’.... Then again bidding him adieu, she broke from him and precipitately retired.

Osmond, with despairing eyes, pursued her receding steps; when she was no longer visible, he threw himself, in an agony too great for description, upon the spot where they had parted....‘Thus thus, then’ he wildly exclaimed, ‘end all my fond, my flattering hopes! Oh,

why....why was I permitted to indulge in such, since destined to have them disappointed !"

He now raved with all the violence of resentment against the cruel and unprincipled author of his unhappiness ; then again softened into tenderness at the recollection of Lady O'Sinister's kindness. Her conduct now appeared to him in a more noble light than it had ever done before ; since, from the explanation that had just taken place, he was convinced she had been actuated to give him her daughter....the treasure of her life, as she emphatically styled her, chiefly by a wish to make atonement to him for the injuries his family had experienced from her Lord. When he thought of those injuries....when he thought of Lord O'Sinister's having meditated the destruction of his sister, he spurned at himself for regretting the idea of not being allied to him : but the feelings which occasioned this indignation against himself, were but transient ; love, almighty love, quickly resumed his empire over him, and every nerve throbbled with anguish at the thoughts of being for ever separated from Cordelia. In the bitterness of disappointment he was at first tempted to accuse Lady O'Sinister of sacrificing too much to the public opinion ; but a little reflection convinced him a woman of delicacy could not have acted on the present occasion in any other manner than she did.

From the temple he repaired to the spot where he had so unexpectedly beheld the lovely girl. He threw himself on the sod which her feet had so recently pressed, he bent over the waters which had reflected her image, and with which he had every reason to believe her tears had mingled....Yes, her sighs, her attitude, her withdrawing from the gay and brilliant assembly in the house, all convinced him that sorrow was seated at her heart, as did equally her exclamation, her fainting, at discovering him, that he was the cause of that sorrow.

He continued wandering about the gardens till the dawn of morning, when perceiving he could no longer escape observation in them, he retreated to the house, and desired to be shewn to a chamber....This being done, Mactalla, but without being called for, was sent

to him. Absorbed in the most saddening reflections Osmond for some time heeded not the strange grimaces and broken exclamations of his valet. At length he was roused to something like attention, by Mactalla's saying as he took his coat from him.... 'How unfortunate, how unfortunate!' and turning hastily to him, demanded what?

'Oh, nothing,' replied Mactalla, as he folded up his coat, and laid it upon a chair, 'but that you should fall in love with the daughter of the devil.'

'How!' exclaimed Osmond, starting, and surveying him with a kind of wild earnestness.

'Aye, its too true,' returned Mactalla. 'I have found it all out.'

'Found what out?' asked Osmond, with the utmost impatience; 'don't let me be tortured now with one of your round-about stories.'

'Oh faith I wish the story I have to tell you was as sweet as it is short....As I was amusing myself on the lawn with looking at the company coming and going, and dancing about in groups, like fairies by moonlight, who should I see but your beautiful mistress, and her handsome mother, coming towards a carriage, with that old fox, Mr. Raymond, as I thought him....Oh ho, says I to myself, on seeing them, here will be good news for my master; so I turned to a servant of the Duke's who was with me, and asked him where that gentleman, nodding at Mr. Raymond, lived?.... What, Lord O'Sinister? said he....Lord O'Sinister, repeated I; pho, pho, no, not Lord O'Sinister, but that gentleman....and I again looked at the supposed Mr. Raymond....Why, man, I tell you, said he, that the gentleman you are looking at is Lord O'Sinister, an English Nobleman, who has a villa adjoining my Lord's, with whom he has lately become very intimate.'

'Intimate!' echoed Osmond, involuntarily, and with a presageful idea, that if this were true, he should not much longer enjoy the friendship of his Excellency.

'Yes,' replied Mactalla, 'I enquired into all the particulars, and so found that it was true enough.'

'I hope,' said Osmond, 'you made no observation relative to his Lordship.'

‘Me!’ returned Mactalla, somewhat confused, ‘no not a word did I say about him.’

‘Not one word?’ asked Osmond, in an incredulous tone.

‘No, by the Powers, not one, but that he was an old rogue, and that it was a thousand pities he didn’t break his neck clambering over the Appennines.’

‘Ah, I thought something of the kind,’ cried Osmond, shaking his head; ‘in future I must request, nay insist, on your silence with regard to him.’

He then extorted a promise to this effect from Mactalla, dismissed him, and threw himself half undressed upon the couch, which he quitted in the course of a few hours, without having once closed his eyes, and with both an aching head and heart, and also a resolution not to touch on the subject which he had left Naples for the purpose of consulting with the Duke on, since he had discovered Lord O’Sinister to be the father of his Cordelia.

While dressing, Mactalla made his appearance, and brought him a message from his Excellency, requesting his company to breakfast, *tête-à-tête* with him in his library.

Osmond hastened thither, and was received by his noble patron with his usual condescension; the attendants were dismissed, and they sat down to breakfast alone.

After a little desultory conversation, principally relative to the entertainment of the preceding night, the Duke suddenly turning a scrutinizing glance upon Osmond, said.... ‘You don’t look well, my young friend, this morning; I’m much inclined to imagine this climate does not agree with you.’

Osmond sighed heavily.... ‘Would that I had not more reason to complain of other matters,’ cried he, involuntarily, ‘than I have of it.’

‘Indeed! and pray may I, without the charge of impertinence, enquire what it is you have to complain of?’

Osmond recollected himself, and blushed deeply at his inadvertence.... ‘Nothing worth your Excellency’s listening to,’ returned he.

A silence of some minutes followed these words, during which the Duke appeared both thoughtful and embarrassed....At length, again turning his eyes on Osmond....'My young friend,' said he with a forced smile, 'I am afraid you will think strangely of me, when I tell you that I should not have been sorry to have heard you acknowledge I was not mistaken.'

Osmond started and stared, as well indeed he might, with astonishment.

'The truth is,' proceeded his Excellency, after another pause, 'my having taken a foreigner under my protection, and given him a situation which many natives of the kingdom solicited in vain, has caused such general discontent, that I....I,' hesitating greatly, and rather shunning the penetrating eyes of Osmond, 'find myself in a most awkward predicament, insomuch that I should not have been sorry to have found you disinclined to continue here.'

'Then be satisfied, my Lord,' said Osmond, rising involuntarily from the table, his face suffused with the glow of indignation, 'for I am disinclined to continue here....to continue where treachery pursues me wherever I go.'

'Treachery!' repeated the Duke, also quitting the table; 'pray explain yourself; for I....I really am at a....a loss,' but again hesitating, so as to convince Osmond he was insincere in the assertion, 'to comprehend your meaning.'

'Excuse me, my Lord,' said Osmond, again recollecting himself, and in a respectful but decided tone; 'neither explanation nor recrimination would, I am confident, be availing here; nor shall I longer obtrude upon your Excellency's time, than to entreat that from this instant you would consider yourself extricated from the unpleasant predicament in which you stand on my account, as the situation you were so graciously pleased to bestow on me is again at your Excellency's disposal.'

'Nay,' cried the Duke, evidently hurt, 'you wrong me, if you suppose, by what I said, that I meant you should resign it immediately.'

'If your Excellency thought I would not,' replied Os-

mond, warmly, 'you must have had a very ignoble opinion of me.'

'Well,' said the Duke, 'I must insist on your accepting such an equivalent for it as shall enable you to settle yourself with comfort in your own country.'

'Pardon me, my Lord,' returned Osmond, haughtily and firmly, 'I will neither wound my own feelings, nor suffer your Excellency to run the risk of having your's wounded, by again receiving any additional obligation from you; all I require from your Excellency is common justice....that you will allow it to be generally understood, that your gift to me was not revoked on account of any unworthiness on my part.'

'Depend upon it,' returned the Duke, equivocally, 'I will not say any thing to injure you; your conduct to the Acerenza family, were I even inclined to do so, would prevent me.'

'My conduct whilst I enjoyed the patronage of your Excellency, would equally do so, I should hope,' returned Osmond, with encreasing warmth.

The Duke's brows contracted, his sallow cheek became flushed; he drew back a few paces, and measured Osmond with a scornful eye....'Young man,' he then haughtily said, 'recollect yourself.'

Osmond turned in indignant silence from him, and paced the room for a few minutes, ere he would trust himself to speak again; then pausing....'I see, I see,' cried he, in a tone of mingled dejection and bitterness, 'in this business the cloven foot that has so long pursued me. That your Excellency has a noble heart, I believe,' added he; 'provoke not, therefore, that remorse which the noble heart never fails of experiencing for injuring the innocent, by suffering yourself to be prevailed on to villify my character.'

'Come, come, Sir,' hastily said his Excellency, 'be rational, and instead of admonishing, suffer yourself to be admonished; I ask no explanation of your ambiguous sayings, but merely advise you, instead of any longer wasting your time in idle pursuits in Naples, to return without delay to your native country, in which I again offer to provide you with the means of settling yourself.'

‘ Worlds should not tempt me to accept that offer ; but though I decline, I entreat your Excellency to believe I am truly grateful for it.’

‘ Well, Sir, I am sorry to find your pride so excessive ; should it lower, you will find me still ready to perform what I have offered.’

‘ That I should ever again trouble your Excellency, seems most unlikely, as it is my intention to follow your advice, by immediately setting off for England.’

‘ I rejoice to hear so,’ returned the Duke, in an accent that permitted Osmond to have no doubt of his not having now spoken with sincerity : ‘ Come, disdain not good counsel ; be a friend to yourself, by suffering me to prove one to you.’

‘ I have already taken the liberty of mentioning how your Excellency can do so,’ replied Osmond ; ‘ let not my character be aspersed, when I am no longer at hand to vindicate it, and you will indeed give yourself a claim to the title of one.’

He then begged permission to take an immediate leave of his Excellency, which, after a little hesitation, was granted him.

The chaise which had brought him from Naples was still in waiting at the villa ; and in a few minutes after he had bid adieu to the Duke, he was on his way back, for the purpose of making immediate preparations for his departure for England.

During his short journey various were the changes his mind underwent, and violent the struggles he experienced....That it was some vile allegation of Lord O’Sinister’s, which had occasioned the Duke to withdraw his patronage from him, he had not the smallest doubt, as but the preceding morning his Excellency had expressed a hope of his having relinquished all thoughts of returning to England ; and in the height of the resentment and indignation which this cruel treachery, this unprovoked enmity of his Lordship’s inspired him with, he was almost tempted to hasten back, and in the presence of the Duke confront him with his villany. Nothing but consideration for the feelings of Lady O’Sinister, and her lovely and beloved daughter, withheld him from

being under a necessity of making immediate arrangements for my departure from Naples.'

'From Naples !...and pray may I enquire whither you are going ?'

'To England.'

'To England !...good Heaven, how fortunate !' exclaimed Signor Barbarino, in a tone of extacy.

'Fortunate !' repeated Osmond, involuntarily, and with a look of astonishment.

'Yes ; for I am about departing for that kingdom myself ; and came hither as much for the purpose of trying to prevail on you to accompany me thither, as for that of thanking you for your kindness and attention to me. Will you permit me to travel with you ?'

'Most willingly, my dear Sir.'

'I am going thither,' resumed the old gentleman, 'in quest of what I have long been a stranger to...happiness ; 'tis there only I can recover it...there only I can make expiation for my manifold sins and offences !'

Osmond looked at him with encreased astonishment, and nothing but politeness and, the consideration that he could not ask his confidence without granting him his in return, which many reasons militated against his doing, prevented his giving utterance to the curiosity which his mysterious language excited.

'All my arrangements are already made,' proceeded Signor Barbarino, 'so that whenever you choose to depart, I am ready to attend you.'

Osmond replied it was his intention to set out the ensuing day, if he, Signor Barbarino, had no objection.

'On the contrary,' he answered, to the great satisfaction of Osmond, who was anxious in the extreme to quit Naples, lest a longer continuance in it should expose him to some new insult from Lord O'Sinister, that would compel him to pass those bounds he had prescribed to himself with regard to his Lordship, out of respect to the feelings of his lady and daughter.

Their plans finally adjusted, and his promise given that he would return to dine with Signor Barbarino, he withdrew from his apartment to his own, for the purpose of commencing preparations for his departure, and

apprising Mactalla, while he had the power of making a choice, of the probability there was of his not being able to retain him in his service after his arrival in England.

‘Well, that shan’t prevent my going with you there,’ said Mactalla, as soon as he had a little recovered the surprise which the unexpected information of Osmond had occasioned him. ‘No, no, by the Powers, I wouldn’t give up the chance of remaining in your service, for any offer that could be made me here.’

‘I can only say in return,’ said Osmond, ‘that I trust fortune will yet smile sufficiently to enable me to reward, in the manner I wish, your faithful attachment.’

‘Tut, tut, Signor, don’t speak of rewarding a man for doing what is agreeable to himself. I like and love you, and that is the reason I stay with you.’....Then after a short pause, ‘to be sure there is one thing I should like to have done before I leave Italy.’

‘What may that be?’ asked Osmond.

‘Why, Signor, to get a few lines written, to have placed at the head of my father’s grave, for the purpose of letting people know who he was. There he lies in the church-yard of Acerenza, without any one knowing any thing of the matter; which, seeing he was a brave soldier, fought many severe battles, and received innumerable wounds, I think rather a hard case.’

‘You want an epitaph for him,’ said Osmond, smiling at the pride his valet betrayed in wishing to perpetuate the name of his father.

‘The very thing,’ replied Mactalla joyfully; ‘if I could but get somebody to write one, there is a young man belonging to Acerenza now in Naples, who I know I could depend on for getting it engraved on the tombstone.’

‘Well, suppose I was to invoke a muse on this occasion,’ asked Osmond, ‘what should I say of the virtues of your father?’

‘The virtues,’ repeated Mactalla, as if a little puzzled by the question, and rubbing his head, thoughtfully; ‘why I can’t pretend to say, Signor, that he was very

ober, nor yet very quiet ; the truth is, indeed, he was a devil of a drinker and a fighter.'

' Well, but doubtless he was steady in his attachments, constant to his wife, and.....'

' Ah, the less, Signor,' interrupted Mactalla, shaking his head, ' we say on that subject, I believe, the better, at least, if the word of my mother was to be taken.'

' Well, returned Osmond, again smiling, ' bravery, like charity, covers a multitude of faults ; so your father shall be handed down to posterity as a good man.'

He accordingly sat down, to a writing table, and in a few minutes wrote the promised epitaph, to the unspeakable delight of Mactalla.

Osmond had no farewell visits to pay in Naples ; as soon, therefore, as the necessary arrangements for his departure were made, he repaired to his new friend, and passed the remainder of the day with him, and the next morning, as agreed upon, embarked with him, their baggage and valets, on board a vessel in the Bay of Naples.

Their voyage we shall pass over in silence, nothing occurring in the course of it worth mentioning, and content ourselves with saying, they arrived in safety at Falmouth.

Osmond landed without knowing to what part of the kingdom Signor Barbarino was bound, nor did he learn, till he was about setting off for Scotland, when the old gentleman acquainted him he was also going thither, and into his immediate neighbourhood, and therefore begged he might be allowed to pursue the remainder of his journey with him.

In this request Osmond readily acquiesced ; he had gradually indeed conceived such a prepossession in favour of the old gentleman, who, though often desponding, and always mysterious, was nevertheless a pleasing companion, that he could not think of bidding him adieu without regret ; neither in the course of their journey could he altogether suppress the curiosity he felt to know to whom he was going in his neighbourhood ; his enquiry on this subject, however, was evaded in a manner which prevented his renewing it.

At a small town about three miles from Heathwood,

Osmond took leave of him, but with a promise of seeing him again the ensuing day, till when he avowed an intention of remaining where they had alighted. Here also Osmond was induced, by his uncertainty concerning the present situation of his family, to leave Mactalla for the present....a circumstance which was extremely agreeable to Signor Barbarino, as he had taken a very particular fancy to the merry valet of his young friend, insomuch that at all times he preferred his attendance to that of his own servant, probably owing to the gratification he afforded his curiosity relative to Osmond, about whom and his family he sought opportunities of asking questions.

A carriage not being immediately to be procured, Osmond proceeded to the habitation of his father on foot. As he drew near the beloved spot, endeared to his affections by being at once the residence of those most dear to his regard, and the scene of his purest felicity....the only felicity he had ever yet experienced without alloy, his heart swelled with a thousand delicious sensations....a thousand delightful anticipations; and in spite of all the vexation he had lately experienced, the disappointment of his fondest hopes, the wounds inflicted on his heart by treachery, he would have felt happy at the moment, but for the uncertainty above alluded to....the conjectural fears which a review of Lord O'Sinister's conduct caused him to be agitated by.

It was now the latter end of February, but as yet the brownness of Winter had in no place given way to the verdure of Spring, and the dreariness of the faded landscape was encreased by the wintry music of a cold and rustling wind, and the gloom of closing day, for it was late when Osmond set out for Heathwood. But when he caught a glimpse of his native home, fear and melancholy were alike dissipated. He bounded forward, but on a sudden stopped, horror-struck at beholding the house shut up, without the smallest indication of its being inhabited.

‘Oh God!’ he exclaimed, in agony, ‘what an ominous sight is this! Has death been busy here....have I returned only to mourn over the ashes of my parents!’

He hastened to the gate ; he knocked and called aloud ; but the mournful echo of his own voice was the only sound that met his ear, save the melancholy lowing of the cattle scattered o'er the lea. He tried, but in vain, to discover a glimpse of light through the shutters, or a tint of smoke from the chimnies. At length, determined on ascertaining the fact, whether or not the house was entirely deserted, he climbed over the gate, and made his way through the shrubbery. As he feared, however, he found the rear shut up like the front, and was of consequence fully convinced that it was totally uninhabited, as also that it had been so for a long time ; the dock spreading its broad leaves over the very threshold of the doors, and the court, and winding avenues through the shrubbery, on the neatness of which he knew his father used to pride himself, being completely overgrown with weeds. That some dreadful event had occasioned the desertion of this beloved spot, he had not the smallest doubt, as for an instant he could not suppose, that had the family been only gone on a visit, or party of pleasure, they would not have left some person to take care of it.

Grief and disappointment for a few minutes completely subdued the unhappy youth : he returned to the front of the house, and leaning his face against the door, which but a few minutes before he had hoped the hand of his father would have opened to him, shed a torrent of bitter tears. Then repassing the gate, he bent his steps to the nearest cottage, for the purpose of enquiring into the fate of his family, which he doubted not being known to all in the neighbourhood.

This cottage happened to be Farmer Watkins's, whom Osmond well remembered having often, when a boy, amused himself, in concert with other lads of his age, at his expense, his precise manners, and affectation of sanctity, rendering him the butt of the village.

The casements were not yet closed and through them Osmond espied the farmer, seated by himself before a blazing fire, which sent forth a cheerful light, that caused his mansion to form a striking contrast to the lonely and dreary one he had just quitted.

Osmond tapped at the door, and was desired to come in. He accordingly raised the latch and entered. The former, supposing it to be one of his rustic neighbours, who had called on him, turned indolently on his chair; but at sight of a very elegant young man, instinctively started from it. Osmond as instinctively took off his hat, and approached him with an extended hand: for though he had never liked Watkins, yet in the present state of his feelings, his being an old acquaintance was sufficient to make him experience a sensation of joy at beholding him.

‘I perceive,’ cried he, with a forced smile, seeing Watkins surveying him with a vacant stare, ‘that you do not recollect me.’

‘I profess,’ answered Watkins, ‘if thou knowest me, thou hast the advantage of me, for I remember thee not.’

‘What, not the son of your neighbour, Osmond Munro?’

‘Osmond Munro!’ repeated Watkins; ‘verily I never should have recognized thee, if thou hadst not proclaimed thyself, for thou art encreased much in stature since I last saw thee; thou left this a boy, and hast returned a man.’

‘Which, considering I have been some years absent, is not to be wondered at: but doubtless, my friend, you can give me some information respecting my family....’
‘Tis unnecessary, I am sure, to tell you how greatly I have been shocked and alarmed at finding their house shut up.

‘Than thou hast not lately heard from them?’

‘No, for some time past I have led rather an unsettled life.’

‘True, I recollect since thou quittedst this, thou hast been a great traveller; been to foreign parts, and seen many rare sights.’

‘Many.but, my friend, I am on the rack to know something of my family.’

‘Well, I will satisfy thy curiosity.’

‘Curiosity!’ repeated Osmond, involuntarily, and resentfully; ‘my anxiety you mean.’

kins nodded.... 'Thy father is....'.....He paused, looked earnestly at Osmond.

'Dead!' said Osmond, in a faltering voice, horror-struck by this pause, which he imputed to compassion for his feelings.

'No, thou art mistaken,' replied Watkins, shaking his head and smiling maliciously, as Osmond, on afterwards catching his look at the moment to mind, recollected, 'he was dead, but in the house of bondage.'

'Prison!' exclaimed Osmond; 'great Heaven, for

what he not paying what he justly oweth.'

'And who....who,' demanded Osmond, in a tone of incredulity, and with a look of anguish, 'who is the mercenary creditor that has done this?....for merciless must he be who could deprive of his liberty a man whose principles like my father's must be too well known, to permit him not to be entertained of his paying what he owed, if he had the power.'

'My father,' resumed Watkins, 'contracted a large debt, as thou doubtless knowest since part of the borrowed money was, I understand, sent to supply thy necessities at the University, whither thou wast so foolishly sent.' 'In our opinion on the subject is unasked,' interrupted Osmond, haughtily; 'if you have any intelligence to communicate respecting my father, and choose to impart it, would thank you to be as brief as possible.'

Watkins again nodded, and with a ghastly smile of triumph thus proceeded.... 'To that worthy nobleman, O'Sinister, thy father, as I was about imparting to him, contracted a large debt.'

Osmond started.... 'My fears were then prophetic!' he then exclaimed, distractedly striking his forehead, 'but go on....go on,' he added, waving his hand to him to proceed.

'The bond which the worthy Peer received from thy father for the money he lent him, he gave as a reward for his long and faithful services to a domestic of his, who, in want of a little ready cash, sold the said bond to me, upon which I called upon thy father for the redemption of the same; and he not discharging my just

‘demand, I put him into the house of bondage, where verily he shall stay, until he has paid me the uttermost farthing.’

‘No doubt,’ cried Osmond, with a smile of bitterness, ‘since of course he whose vile agent you are, has instructed you to prosecute him with the utmost rancour.’

‘I know not what thou meanest,’ returned Watkins angrily.

‘I mean,’ replied Osmond, ‘that a villain has planned the destruction of an innocent man, and engaged you to assist him in the business.’

‘Ah, I perceive,’ cried Watkins, spitefully, ‘thou retainest something of the old leaven, for thou wert always a saucy and presumptuous boy; but verily no wonder for thy father was ever too sparing of the rod to thee. But if thou waxest wroth, thou must quit my habitation where the voice of clamour is a stranger. I invited thee not to enter it, therefore I do no wrong in bidding thee to quit it.’

‘Fear not,’ said Osmond, surveying him with forced composure, ‘that I shall make my visit too long; I know myself too well, not to be afraid of continuing much longer in your company.’

‘What, thou threatenest then,’ returned Watkins, changing colour; ‘if thou dost not take thyself off directly, thou wilt compel me to cry aloud.’

‘Thy crying aloud would avail thee but little, if I have decided on obeying the present impulse; but I should view myself with scorn, if I stooped to chastise such a miscreant as thou art; ’tis he who has set thee on this, and not thou, his poor abject tool, that I shall single out for vengeance.’

He then rushed from the cottage. The day was by this time almost closed in; but neither the deep shadows of approaching night, the loud howling of the wind which had increased to a storm, nor yet the rain that accompanied it, were regarded by the unhappy Osmond. The dreadful situation of his family occupied every thought, engrossed every sense. He became almost distracted as he reflected on this, unable as he was to do

wise any mode by which it might be alleviated ; for of the real profits accruing from the situation he had held under the Duke D'Amalfi, but a few guineas, in consequence of the great expence incurred by travelling, now remained, and he knew not a being to whom he could look for sympathy, much less assistance on the present occasion. In the midst of the agonizing reflections to which it gave rise, he suddenly recollected his not having enquired the prison of his father. To return, however, to the insolent and malicious Watkins, was not to be thought of. From the middle of the heath, therefore, into which he had unconsciously wandered, he was casting his eyes around in quest of another cottage, at which he might make the enquiry, when they accidentally fell upon a man in the garb of a labourer, a few paces from him, and who for some time had, though unperceived, been attentively regarding him. Ere Osmond had time to decide whether he would address him or not, the man drew near, and with a low but rustic bow, said....

‘ No offence, I hope, Sir, but you seem, begging your pardon for saying so, to be in a kind of quandary, so if I can be of any service to you, command me.’

‘ Thank you, my friend,’ replied Osmond ; ‘ if you are an inhabitant of this place, you can perhaps inform me where Mr. Munro is to be found ?’

‘ Captain Munro ! bless his heart, that I can ; but,’ as if suddenly recollecting himself, ‘ you must first, if you please, be kind enough to tell me your business with him.’

‘ I am his son,’ returned Osmond.

‘ What, master Osmond !’ almost shouted the other ; ‘ dang it, who could have thought of this ?’

‘ Methinks,’ hastily exclaimed Osmond, ‘ your voice is familiar to me.’

‘ Ah, you have heard it often enough to remember it ; many a trick has Tom Stubbs helped you to play.’

‘ My honest friend,’ cried Osmond, extending his hand, and with something of a joyous sensation, for he had not only seen, but heard sufficient from his father, of the honest rustic, to make him think highly of him, ‘ I ask your pardon for not sooner recollecting you, but

the shock I have received since my return hither, may be my excuse for not having done so. I expected I should have been received by my family, instead of which.....

'I know, I know,' interrupted Stubbs, almost sobbing.

'You said,' rejoined Osmond, 'you could inform me where to find my father.'

'Yes, I can give you all the particulars you want to hear about him; but this is no place to tell the story in. The wind blows cold, and the rain is coming on faster and faster; and besides....besides,' added the honest farmer, tenderly laying his hand upon the arm of Osmond, 'you are wet already.'

'No matter,' returned Osmond, 'I wish not to lose a moment in seeing my father.'

'Tis quite too late to see him to-night,' said Stubbs; 'and too dark, and too dismal, I am sure, to go to any distance; so you must come hoame with me, to my cottage; I cannot, 'tis true, give you a fine bed, but I'll give you a clean one, and what is more, a hearty welcome. Yes, by goles, if I had jewels and gold to set before you, you'd be as welcome to them as to my bacon and eggs; so come along, come along, Mr Osmond, and I pray you do not let your spirits sink; for according to the old saying, 'when things are at the worst, they'll mend.'.... Your father is an honest and good man, and God has ever been such in his special keeping.'

The indignation with which the insolence of Watkins had inspired him, had dried up the tears that burst from Osmond, at beholding the desertion of his native home; but at the kindness of Farmer Stubbs his dry and burning eye again became deluged; and forgetting that the darkness of the hour would conceal his emotion, he hastily passed his hand over his face.

Since he could not obtain an interview with his father that night, he readily accepted an invitation, that promised to afford him the melancholy pleasure of conversing about him.

Farmer Stubbs found his good dame busy in preparing supper against his return. He quickly announced his guest to her, and as quickly made him exchange his wet coat for a dry one. He then put him in possession

rm seat, which he was wont to occupy himself in
imney corner, threw some additional logs upon the
id called to his dame to produce a bottle of her el-
ne, for the excellence of which she was famed
hout the neighbourhood. Not finding this call,
er, obeyed with the promptness he expected, he
from the table, surprised as well as angry, for his
he had always considered as good-natured and
able as himself, and, beckoning her into another
enquired the reason of her not having done what
ired?

hy, Thomas,' replied she, 'you know there was
le of the wine remaining.....'

ang it,' exclaimed the farmer, retreating a few pa-
om her, and surveying her with a look of mingled
and ridicule, 'art thou growing a miser in thy old

oa, Thomas, noa; God forbid; but yesterday,
I went to poor Madam Munro, with'the two wood-
you shot, she looked so sadly, that I took it into
ad she had not comfortable things to take; so this
ng meeting Jem Macallister going to D....., I
ht him home with me, and sent her all the wine I
ft, with my duty.'

id you?' said the farmer, in an altered accent, and
approaching his dame; 'then thou art a good girl
and dang me but thou shalt get a new hat at Eas-
prove that I think thee so. But,' thoughtfully,
in awkward thing, to be sure, to mention a thing,
en not produce it,' specially when one can't tell the
i why; for I wouldn't, for the price of a new
have the poor youth know that his parents were
len for any thing to such poor folks as we. Noa,
e's grieved, and sick enough at heart already, with-
nowing that. Ah, dame, hadst thou seen him, as
in the middle of the bleak heath....I verily thought
as some poor crazed being, going to make away
himself.' Then, after a short pause....' Well, it
be helped; since we can't have wine, why we must
tent with ale; so let's have a humming jug in no
and plenty of sugar and ginger; and, d'ye hear,

'Good God !' he exclaimed, on recovering a little from the shock he had received, 'there must certainly be some mistake in all this ; the bond which I gave to Lord O'Sinister, and you say his servant has sold to you, was not payable in less than five years, and then only by instalments.'

'Well, though thou doubtest my word,' cried Watkins, 'thou wilt not, perhaps, doubt the evidence of thine own eyes ; and as he spoke, he drew forth the bond from his bosom, and unfolded it to the view of Munro, who hastily glancing over it, perceived with amazement, and it might also be said with horror, for little short of that did he feel at the idea of being in the power of such a man as he considered Watkins, that it was payable on demand. The livid paleness of his cheek, the dropping of his eyelids on his ascertaining this, more forcibly proclaimed, than any language could have done, what he felt at the moment. After a silence of a few minutes, during which he appeared buried in thought, he lifted his heavy eyes to Watkins, who, all the time, had, with the most exulting malice, been regarding him, and begged he would let the business rest as it was at present, until he had written to Lord O'Sinister on the subject, and enquired into what appeared to him at present both a mysterious and treacherous transaction.

'At all events,' added he, 'to have recourse to hostile measures against me would be of no service whatever to you, as it is totally out of my power to liquidate any part of the debt. At the very moment you entered, I was on the point of writing to his Lordship, to apologise for my being unable to do so at present, as about this time I conceived he might expect payment.

The crafty Watkins, apprehensive of his real intentions respecting him being disappointed, if he gave him any reason to suspect them, immediately replied....

'Do not trouble thyself unnecessarily ; whatever thou mayest think to the contrary, I am not destitute of charity and loving kindness ; write at thy leisure to the great man, and when thou hast received his answer, let me know, and I will call upon thee, to have this affair settled to our mutual satisfaction.'

He then departed, leaving Munro not only surprised at his conduct, but penetrated with remorse by it, since it led him to believe that he had wronged him, in the opinion he had so long harboured of him.

That a man of Munro's understanding should so easily be imposed on, may appear unnatural to some ; but it may be understood by those who think so, that his want of knowledge of the artifices of life, without which the wariness of distrust seldom becomes the inmate of the virtuous mind, bore no proportion to his knowledge of its workings ; he would have been happy to have concealed from his wife and daughter the cause of Watkins's visit, but at the time of receiving it they were unfortunately in an adjoining room, and so overheard the whole of the conversation between them : but great as was the disquietude this gave to Mrs Munro, it was trifling compared to that Elizabeth felt, owing to her knowledge of the real character of his Lordship and consequent development of the motives which had actuated him to act in such a manner with regard to the bond. That he had resolved on her destruction, or that of her family, she early saw ; but the terrible apprehensions which this conviction inspired, she sedulously concealed, persuaded that their divulgement might do much mischief, but no good, since she well knew her father had not the means of avoiding any evil with which he might be threatened, and that he could not hear of Lord O'Sinister's vile designs respecting her, without being irritated to some measure, that would not fail of aggravating the malice of his Lordship.

To Providence she looked up for frustrating the intentions of this their unprovoked and persecuting foe. She prayed too, more fervently than ever, for the speedy return of Delacour, whom she considered as a kind of bulwark against his Lordship. She tried also to prevent herself from sinking into despair, by hoping that, even if things came to the worst....even if her father were imprisoned, still his confinement would only last till Delacour came back.

Munro only delayed, after the departure of Watkins, in writing to Lord O'Sinister, till he had a little collected

himself. He entered into a warm expostulation with his Lordship, on the deception which had been practised on him, besought him by return of post, for he supposed him at his house in London, to let him know to what it was to be imputed ; and ended by declaring, that should his Lordship decline interfering with Watkins on the subject, he should conceive himself cruelly treated.

That his Lordship should have put it in the power of any one to molest him, he could only account for by concluding some one had injured him in his opinion ; but then, if this were the case, what an ignoble mind did such a step augur his Lordship possessed of !

Munro was not in a state of health to bear either an encrease of anxiety, or violent agitation, without injury. Nothing but a dread of alarming his wife and daughter prevented his keeping his bed the day after Watkins's visit, he felt himself so extremely indisposed. Towards evening he grew so much worse, that he could no longer conceal his situation from them ; and soon after tea, was on the point of withdrawing to his chamber, when a loud knock at the hall door caused him to pause : on its being opened, a rough voice was heard enquiring for him. Munro fancying there was some hesitation in the servant's answer, nodded to Elizabeth to open the parlour door ; she obeyed, but started back in affright, at beholding three ruffianly-looking men close to it, who instantly rushed in, and with a ferocious glance round the apartment, approached her father. Munro's heart almost misgave him at their sight ; still, however, with tolerable composure, he enquired their business with him ?....

'Why not the most agreeable business in the world, to be sure, Captain,' cried the foremost of them ; 'but such things,' and he smiled as he probably thought facetiously, 'will sometimes happen in the best regulated families. We have a writ against you, at the suit of one Jeremiah Watkins, of this neighbourhood.'

At this confirmation of his fears Munro involuntarily raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, in astonishment at the treachery and cruelty of the wretch ; while Mrs. Munro, with a deep sigh, dropped back, fainting, on the chair, from which she had started in terror, at

the entrance of the ruffians. Munro with difficulty now raised his enfeebled frame from his chair, and made an effort to approach his wife, but was prevented by one of the men.

'Come, come, Captain,' exclaimed he, interposing between them, 'I ask pardon, but your Lady is in good hands, and no time must be lost, for it is a long walk to D.....'

Elizabeth turned wildly at these words from her mother, and almost shrieking, repeated....'To D..... ! Oh good God !' she exclaimed, wringing her hands, 'surely you will not think of taking him to D..... at such an hour, and in such a night as this, (for it was both stormy and wet ;) he is ill, and it will be his death, perhaps, if you do. Oh, I conjure you,' dropping almost unconsciously on her knees, 'if he be indeed your prisoner, let him remain here at least this night.'

'Sorry I can't oblige you, Miss,' replied one of the men, 'but the thing is utterly impossible ; we must do our duty, let the consequences to others be what they may.'

Elizabeth, but without changing her attitude, turned her imploring eyes from him to her father. Munro made an effort to speak, but an unsuccessful one ; agony of mind had completely overcome him ; and as he involuntarily leant upon one of the men, he motioned with his languid hand to another to bring him a glass of water from the sideboard. The man obeyed, and after he had swallowed it, he recovered sufficiently to be enabled to bid his daughter arise.

'We must part, my dearest girl,' he cried, pressing her to his bosom, on which she had sunk, 'but it will only be for a few hours. In the morning you and your mother, you know, can both come to me to D..... ; in the interim I conjure you to exert yourself ; the storm, I allow you, is rough, but by calling reason and fortitude to our aid, we may preserve ourselves from being completely wrecked by it. Your mother will need both support and consolation, to enable her to bear up against the rude shock she has just received ; do not, therefore,

by yielding to your present feelings, incapacitate yourself from offering such to her, and thus render worse.'

CHAP. XVII.

'Yet Providence, that ever waking eye,
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
Of mortals lost to hope.'

THOMAS

'OH, cruel and obdurate father,' involuntarily and in an under tone, exclaimed Munro, as he gazed on the pale countenance of his affrighted daughter, in vain endeavoured to make the promise he required of her, and then on the inanimate form of his father, 'what hast thou not made me and mine suffer! but thee, this hour of bitterness would never have been experienced.'

The men becoming impatient for him to depart, being also anxious to do so himself, ere his wife regained her senses, lest the distress he had no doubt she would betray on recovering should destroy the composure he wished to maintain, he no longer hesitated to attend to her. With trembling hands Elizabeth assisted him on his great-coat, and with an almost bursting heart, followed him to the gate, where he again strained her to his bosom, again besought her to exert herself, and tried to administer some little comfort to her, by reminding her they should meet on the morrow.

The anguish which Elizabeth, for fear of aggravating his, had struggled against in his presence, burst forth the moment he was out of sight. The event that had just befallen him, now that it had really taken place, she considered as a much more disastrous one than when she had merely apprehended it. The hope which had clung to, in order to prevent herself from sinking beneath the anticipation of this misfortune, had now

tirely forsaken her. Delacour might, she reflected, never return; or, if he did, it might be without the power (for an instant she would not suppose....no, she knew his noble nature too well, to permit her to think that it might be without inclination) to succour her father; if so, his sun was for ever set, she feared....she dreaded he had for ever quitted his home.

The night was stormy....rain fell too in large drops; but the agonizing idea of her father's sufferings rendered Elizabeth at the moment regardless of all besides. She continued leaning against the gate at which he had parted from her, till roused by the voice of her mother, who, on recovering and missing her husband, had wildly started from her seat, and, with an intention of following him to the prison, rushed from the house.

Elizabeth interposing between her and the gate, conjured her to give up this intention for the present, as one that could not fail of drawing disappointment and additional sorrow on her, since there was not the least likelihood of her being able to overtake her father, or gain admission to him that night. Mrs. Munro, however, persisted in it, till Elizabeth, in an agony of distress, dropped kneeling at her feet, nor even then relinquished it, till her maternal fears were awakened by the death-like paleness of her daughter, and the wildness of her looks.

'Till to-morrow, then,' cried she, as she eagerly raised her from the ground, and returned with her into the house, 'I will endeavour to controul my impatience to rejoin your father; but then we meet to part no more; yes,' continued she, clasping her hands together, and looking up to Heaven, with all the enthusiasm of tenderness, 'still shall my arm pillow his head, still will I exert myself to mitigate his anguish, still pour the balm of love into his soul, and lull him to his rest, praising my God for permitting me to do so.'

On this night, the most wretched, though many were the sorrowful ones they had passed, Mrs. Munro or Elizabeth ever knew, we shall not dwell; suffice it to say, it was passed without either thinking of rest, and that at the first glimpse of day they prepared for their visit to D.....

As they were on the point of setting off, Stubbs made his appearance....He had heard the preceding night of the arrest of poor Munro, but at too late an hour to think of enquiring after the ladies. He now came for that purpose ; and also to ask whether he could be of any service to them or the Captian, on whom he mentioned his intention of calling immediately, though not without shame as well as sorrow, he protested, at the idea of his having been the means of introducing him to a person capable of serving him as Lord O'Sinister had done....'But to a certainty,' added he, 'his Lordship must be in a state of madness at present, or he never could have been guilty of such conduct.'

'Oh that madness had been the cause of it, for then a hope might be entertained of receiving reparation for it,' Elizabeth with difficulty prevented herself from saying.

She gratefully accepted Stubbs's offer of attending her and her mother to D....., and carrying some things which she had packed up for her father.

No carriage was to be procured in the neighbourhood, and exhausted as she was with grief and agitation, Mrs. Munro, with difficulty, although supported by the arm of her daughter, reached the prison of her husband.

The gloomy and miserable apartment in which she found him, the only furniture of which consisted of a wooden bedstead, on which the goaler's wife had contented herself with spreading a rug for his accommodation, it not being the custom, she informed him, to provide beds for the prisoners, and the idea of the dreadful hours he must have passed by himself in such a place, did not tend to revive her dejected spirits.

'True,' cried Munro, as with one arm he clasped his wife, and with the other his equally shocked daughter to to his bosom, 'my pillow last night was a hard one ; but with all its hardness, many downy ones have been rendered more intolerable, by the thorns a guilty conscience has strewn over them. Besides, how many nobler heads than mine have rested on a worse one ; how many, grown grey in the service of their country, been without a place on which to repose. 'Tis sometimes requisite for us to

look into the situation of others, to check murmurs at our own.'

Munro had passed the night in reflecting and arranging plans for the future....the dreary future he feared.

Persuaded, by a minute retrospect of the conduct of Lord O'Sinister, that there was but little hope of his interfering with Watkins concerning him, and still less, from his knowledge of Watkins's disposition, of his being brought into any terms, he had made up his mind to continuing in prison; and in consequence thereof had decided on immediately endeavouring to procure some person to undertake the management of his farm, and also on parting with his house, provided his wife insisted on taking up her abode with him, which he rather imagined she would.

A few minutes conversation with her sufficing to convince him such was her determination, he sent for Stubbs, of whose having attended them to the prison, and waiting below to know whether he had any commands for him, Elizabeth had informed him, his well-known honesty, and the attachment he had always evinced for him, rendering him anxious to have him undertake the management of his affairs, and briefly explained his present wishes and intentions, and had the satisfaction of finding him willing to undertake what he desired.

This matter being arranged, Elizabeth was deputed to return to Heathwood, for the purpose of packing up such things as were requisite for their accommodation in their new abode, and discharging their little household, Munro conceiving their economy at present could not be of too rigid a nature.

Elizabeth feeling that exertion was absolutely requisite, to prevent her sinking into utter despondence, could not be prevailed on to let a carriage be procured to take her back.

The day was gloomy, but just as she came within sight of Heathwood, the sun breaking through the clouds, that had till then obscured his brightness, and striking full upon the windows and heights in the rear, shed a dazzling cheerfulness o'er the scene, that, from the contrast it presented to the one she had just quitted, height-

ened all the gloomy horrors of the latter in her imagination; but neither this cheerfulness....the wild and thrilling melody of the birds that thronged the adjacent brakes....the soft lowing of the cattle that fed in the vicinity, and was still echoed by the neighbouring hills....nor yet the grateful fragrance of the shrubs that clustered round the house, half hiding its glittering windows, could now, as heretofore, impart a charm to sooth or animate the spirits of Elizabeth. On the contrary, she became still more dejected, since in proportion to the delightfulness of what had so long been the residence of her father, was her regret at his being perhaps for ever torn from it.

Stubbs left her at the gate, for the purpose of preparing the cart, in which he had offered to convey the packages to D....., and sending his wife to assist her in packing.

The tears which Elizabeth had with difficulty suppressed, gushed from her on entering the house, where a melancholy stillness, disordered apartments, half opened shutters, and grates destitute of fire, proclaimed its sad abandonment. In the luxury of grief, however, she did not permit herself to indulge; she entered without loss of time upon the task delegated to her, the most distressing part of which, owing to the pain she had reason to believe it would give them, was her being obliged to inform the two domestics their services were no longer wanting.

Having put up the light articles herself, and selected such of the heavy ones as were required, she left the packing of these to the servants and Dame Stubbs, (who, in pursuance of her husband's desire, had hastened to her,) and repaired to the garden, in order to indulge without restraint the feelings that swelled her heart almost to bursting.

The recollections which this delightful spot revived in her mind, were not by any means calculated to alleviate the bitterness of these. Not a walk, not a shade, not a shrub, almost, which did not recal the memory of some happy or interesting hour. In its bowers, which the winds of autumn were now daily stripping of their gorgeous foliage, still had the summer evenings worn away

in pleasing converse, or innocent amusements. In its winding walks, its sheltering grove, the approach of spring, its protruding buds, and the gradual renovation of a faded world, had been hailed by her with enthusiastic delight. Here, too, had she wandered with Delacour.... with him from whom she now feared she was for ever separated; for except the situation of her parents changed for the better, she solemnly resolved never to enter into any engagement that could render her liable to be removed from them.... Here, too, had his delighted eye ranged with her's o'er nature's beauties; and here.... oh here, had he held her to his heart, and vowed perpetual constancy.

'And must this beloved spot,' she exclaimed, with a burst of anguish at the idea, 'so endeared, so hallowed by tender recollections, must it pass into the hands of strangers?... Oh, cruel and perfidious man,' she added, her thoughts suddenly recurring to Lord O'Sinister, 'what a dreadful use do you make of the bounty of Heaven!'

An approaching step caused her to turn, and with mingled surprise and indignation, she beheld Watkins. He had seen her returning to the house from D....., and being anxious to have a little conversation in private with her, followed her steps, and finding the hall door open, stole in unperceived after her.

Elizabeth started at so unexpectedly beholding him, and obeying the impulse of indignation, directly hurried from him.... He followed.

'Why dost thou fly me?' he cried.... 'I am not a wolf in sheep's clothing, that thou needst fear me. I pray thee let me commune with thee a little.'

In vain, however, would he have implored her to do this, but that it suddenly occurred to her that he might have come for the purpose of making some pleasing proposition relative to her father; and accordingly stopping and turning towards him, she desired to know his business with her.

'Verily,' replied he, in a tone such as she had never before heard him speak in, and with a strange expression

of countenance, 'it is to tell thee that thou art young and fair to look upon, and.....'

Hastily interrupting him, Elizabeth with flashing eyes and kindling cheek, bade him begone, if his intention was to offend her.

'Nay, in truth it is not,' cried he, in deprecating accents: 'only hear me out, and thou wilt find I have no such intention.'

'Be brief then,' returned Elizabeth, somewhat haughtily.

He nodded, and thus went on.... 'Thou art young and fair, as I have already said, but unhappily my wife is neither. On the contrary, she is well stricken in years, and, moreover, is troubled with the cholic, and the phthisic, and the rheumatics; and the quack doctor who was in these parts last year, and to whom I gave a golden guinea for his opinion of her case, said she could not possibly last much longer; now, therefore, if thou wilt promise me that I shall find favour in thy sight, and that when she goeth the way of all flesh, thou and I shalt be one, I will without delay take thy father out of the house of bondage, and wait his own time for the payment of what he owes me.'

For a few minutes, surprise and indignation took from Elizabeth the power of utterance: on regaining it, she commanded him, in accents indicative of the feelings he had excited, to leave her.... 'I cannot find words,' she exclaimed, 'adequate to express my abhorrence of your insolence and treachery.... Begone, therefore, I say, directly, or I shall without further hesitation have you turned hence.'

'Ah,' with a malicious grin, and his cadaverous countenance flushed with rage and spite, 'I should be glad to know who thou wouldst apply to for that purpose: since thy father, by his folly, hast put it out of his own power to befriend thee, thou wilt not find many, I fancy, who will turn champions for thee; so thou hadst better in time humble thy pride to thy fortunes, and not threaten where thou canst not harm.... 'tis my pleasure to stay longer here, in vain, therefore, wilt thou bid me begone;

and as to thy saying thou wouldst get some one to turn me hence, I should laugh to scorn any one who attempted to do so.'

'Indeed!' exclaimed a voice with which he was well acquainted, and instantly Stubbs made his appearance from behind a hedge, where he had overheard the whole of the above conversation, having, under the idea of his being about some mischief, in consequence of seeing him slyly stealing towards the house, followed him thither....' We shall see that, for if you do not march off as fast as those spider legs of your's will carry you, I shall make bold to give your worship a shove.'

'Nay,' cried Watkins, changing colour and shewing any thing but an inclination to laugh, 'I know no right thou hast either to give me a shove or bid me get hence.'

'As to that returned Stubbs, with his usual coolness 'I am not the first man, by many, who has done what he had no right to do: however I think I have a right to do what I now threatened, and, to a certainty I will, if you provoke me, for 'tis the duty of every man to serve his fellow-creatures, more especially an unprotected female. You said, if I understood you right, that Miss Munro would not find it an easy matter now to get a friend; but that's not the first falsehood you told, and I'll be sworn it won't be the last. The daughter of such a man as her father is, will never want a friend in Heaven or on earth. So begone, I say begone, thou oppressor of the oppressed, nor ever dare to shew thy face again, where, in place of happiness, thou hast introduced sorrow....Begone, I say, and bless thy stars for my having let thee off so quietly, for if I did as I wish, I'd make thee kiss the ground for thy audacity....Thou look up to Miss Munro!....thou, to the daughter of a gentleman!....By goles, I know not whether to wonder most at thy wickedness or impudence.'

'Nay, beware how thou slanderest me,' cried Watkins, but retreating as he spoke behind Elizabeth, whom a fear of the good natured Stubbs bringing himself into some scrape on her account, should she leave them together, prevented from immediately retreating to the house; 'I know of no wickedness thou canst charge me with.'

'God forbid I could accuse myself of half so much. But you'll yet meet with your punishment for all, I say....Yes, yes, I make no doubt you'll yet be made feel for all you have made others suffer. The few gotten pounds you have scraped together mayn't aly last....riches maketh unto themselves wings, and fly away; and often when people think themselves secure, they are in most danger....Job, to wit. who are so deep read in scripture cannot but know when he thought himself at the height of his glory, four corners of his dwelling were smote by the wind Heaven, and all that he had perished; and, by the Lord, as I passed by your house this morning, I spied a crack in one of the corners, which, for any thing can tell to the contrary,' and he nodded significantly. Watkins, 'may be the beginning of troubles.'

'Verily,' returned Watkins, in the most spiteful accents, 'I care not if thou spied a thousand cracks, for the landlord repaireth all damages, and the mason he employeth is a kinsfolk of mine, and he and I understand one another.'

'No doubt,' cried Stubbs, with an arch sneer, and nodding, 'and so do I understand you both....Her pretty scoundrel,' he added, 'does mischief in order to get money! So, I suppose, if you insured at one of the fire-offices, we should soon have a bonfire in the village.'

'Neighbour, once for all, I tell thee,' quoth Watkins, with encreasing venom in his voice and countenance, 'thou persistest in traducing me, thou wilt compel me to lay the cudgel of chastisement across thy shoulder. Balaam did across the shoulders of his ass.'

'By the Lord, but I must be a greater ass than Balaam's beast was though, if I let you,' said Stubbs; glancing his eye around, somewhat inflamed with indignation, he perceived a gardener's spade upon the ground which snatching up....'Begone, I say again, begone,' cried he.

'No, 'tis my pleasure,' returned Watkins, determined, if possible, from his unwillingness to be overcome in the presence of Elizabeth, to maintain his ground, 'to tarry longer here.'

'Then 'tis my pleasure that you should not,' cried Stubbs; and darting towards him, he presented the spade, as if it was really his intention to shovel him from the place.

Watkins no longer attempted to remonstrate or resist; he danced round Elizabeth with the greatest agility, and then betook himself to flight. Stubbs, irritated and anxious to expose him to derision, pursued. In his haste to avoid him, Watkins plumped headlong into a horse-pond, midway between his own house and the one he had just quitted; with the greatest difficulty, and all covered with slime, he got out of it, and continued his career, still followed by Stubbs.

The astonishment of Mrs. Watkins, at seeing her husband dripping like a water-god, and out of breath with terror, and running dart into the house pursued by Stubbs, also panting from the latter cause, was too great for description.

'Procure assistance,' cried Watkins, retreating to an inner room, 'for that wicked man,' pointing to Stubbs, 'chaceth me with evil intentions.'

Mrs. Watkins, like an obedient wife, was hastening to the door, for the purpose of doing what she was desired, when seizing her by the wrist, Stubbs entreated her to listen quietly to him for a minute.

'Tis now, Mrs. Watkins,' said he, 'three or four and twenty years at least, since you and I first became acquainted, and during this time I don't think you ever heard any thing bad of me.'

'Why no, truly, I can't say I ever heard any evil of thee.'

'Why then, I think you may give credit to what I shall tell you.'

'Thou canst not deny, surely, that thou hast thrown my spouse into great tribulation.'

'No, but you can't be angry with me for having done so, since it was by taking your part....yes, sly as he looks there, I surprised him making love, boasting of your having got the cholic, and the phthisic, and the devil knows what, and so that of course it might soon be expected you would lie under the sod; and thereupon I got so angry

with him, for speaking in such a manner of such a good prudent wife as you have always been to him, and wishing you dead, that, by the Lord, for the life of me, I couldn't act otherwise than I did.'

'Oh the wicked one!' exclaimed Mrs. Watkins, who being a little inclined to jealousy, from a consciousness of not being an over-agreeable helpmate, readily believed what Stubbs related to her.....' who could have thought of such a thing!'

'Aye, who to be sure: but then remember, Dame, smooth water runs deep.'

'And who is the cockatrice who has enticed him from my bosom?'

'O, no matter; 'tis a person that merits no hard names, and despises him too much to bestow a thought on him; so ask no more questions about her, but think of some way of punishing him....You have fifty pounds a-year, you know, at your own disposal.'

Mrs. Watkins nodded.

'Then will it away from him, and take my word he won't be in so great a hurry for your death as he now is.'

'Verily thou counsellest well,' returned Mrs. Watkins, 'I will, therefore, do as thou advisest, as soon as I can get hold of a man of the law.'

'Oh, then you shall soon have hold of one, for I am going straight to D....., and will send lawyer Claw over to you immediately.'

'Do, and thou wilt confer a kindness on me, for I am much vexed, and longeth to be revenged for the infidelity I have met with.'

'To be sure, or you wouldn't be a woman of spirit... Dang me, if I was you,' and Stubbs looked a little archly, 'if I wouldn't try to make him a little jealous also.'

Mrs. Watkins, notwithstanding her vexation, simpered a little at this speech: her ghastly countenance, however, quickly recovered its natural acerbity on the re-appearance of her husband, who, during the above conversation, which nevertheless had not been lost upon him, had been shifting his clothes in an inner room. He now attempted not only to deny what Stubbs had alledged against him, but to put in a caveat against the hostile in-

tentions of his wife ; but in vain did he try to invalidate the testimony of one, or subdue the resentment of the other ; and Stubbs departed, exulting at the thought of having him punished, in some degree, for his hypocrisy and impudence.

On re-entering the house, he found poor Elizabeth in the parlour, and in an agony of tears ; the specimen which the audacious Watkins had given her, of the insults her now unprotected situation rendered her liable to, having completely overpowered her spirits.

He and his dame exerted themselves to the utmost, to endeavour to console her ; and Elizabeth, convinced that to hearts like theirs, no return for kindness could be half so acceptable as a persuasion of that kindness being of service, forced herself to appear benefited by theirs. In the present state of her feelings, however, so painful was it to her to do this, that she could not avoid rejoicing, when the farmer informed her he was ready to set out to D.....

The prison of her father was a building of ancient date, and had for a considerable period been the residence of a noble family, the head of which forfeited both his title and property, by the active part he took in the memorable rebellion of forty-five. Soon after the confiscation of his fortune, this, the ancient seat of his ancestors, in the stately halls of which bards had often rehearsed the exploits of the valiant, was converted into a prison, for which its strength and healthy situation rendered it well calculated. Great part of its ancient park still remained attached to it, affording a pleasant walk to such as loved the shade of melancholy boughs, and the contemplation of objects calculated to send their souls back to the days of old.

Munro found no difficulty in procuring such apartments as he required ; but though these were reasonable, and he endeavoured to live in the most economical manner, denying to himself indulgences the impaired state of his health rendered almost indispensable, he soon found himself dreadfully straitened with regard to money matters, a circumstance particularly distressing at this period ; the anxiety of Mrs. Munro's mind having

brought on a nervous fever, that rendered her in need of many things he was thus without the power of procuring her.

In this exigence, Elizabeth exerted herself to the utmost of her power to assist her parents. She excelled in fine works, and secretly applied to the priest, who, from time to time, still continued to visit her mother, and was a truly benevolent man, to endeavour to get her employment in this line, amongst the families he visited.

The good man, at once applauding and affected by the motive that induced her to make this application to him, promised to do all in his power to serve her. He kept his word, but without being able to render her any essential service, knowing but few families in the neighbourhood.

Six weeks....six heavy and melancholy weeks passed away, without any change for the better taking place in the situation of her parents, when one morning, at the expiration of this period, as she was returning from a shop in D....., where she had been to make some trifling purchase, she was overtaken and accosted by an elderly man, of rather a genteel appearance, who having inquired whether her name was Munro, and being answered in the affirmative, drew a letter from his pocket, and presented it to her, with an entreaty for her to peruse it on the spot.

Confused and surprised, Elizabeth hesitated for a few minutes what to do; at length, on being urged in a still more vehement manner to an immediate perusal, she broke the seal, but with a hand rendered tremulous by agitation; and casting her eyes over the contents, perceived, with amazement that could only be equalled by the indignation its purport gave rise to, (this being the letter his Lordship had ordered to be delivered to her, after she had had some weeks experience of the bitterness of confinement,) that it came from Lord O'Sinister.

'There, Sir,' cried she, hastily folding it up, her pale cheek flushed to crimson, by the indignant feelings of her soul....'There, Sir,' flinging it to its vile bearer; 'your returning that letter to his Lordship will better explain to him my sentiments relative to its contents, than any

answer I could send to it....He may afflict, but whilst I retain that self-approbation of which he seeks to deprive me, it will not be in his power to humble me....As for you....but,' turning scornfully from him, 'I will not degrade myself by holding further converse with such a being....The man capable of accepting such an employment as you have done, must be invulnerable to reproach, destitute of every principle of honour, generosity, and feeling....the vilest of his species, the most abject of mortals.'

'Nay, young lady, this is being what I call rather severe,' returned the audacious emissary of his Lordship, endeavouring at the same time to obstruct her progress.

Elizabeth pushed by him, and flew, rather than ran, to the prison, towards which, whilst speaking to him, she had been rapidly advancing, forgetting, from the agitation into which the incident had thrown her, that by so doing she might expose him to the observation of her father, (their sitting-room overlooking the street,) and thus, perhaps, be compelled to enter into explanations she had many reasons for wishing to avoid.

What she thought not of really happened. Munro, soon after she went out, sauntered towards a window, whence he beheld the whole of the scene between her and the vile agent of Lord O'Sinister. Her gestures left him no room to doubt her having been grossly insulted; and now....now he felt with agony the loss of liberty....now that he beheld his child insulted, without having the power of flying to her aid, and chastising the wretch who had meanly taken advantage of her unprotected situation to offend her.

Breathless, and trembling in every limb, Elizabeth would gladly have kept out of his sight, till her agitation had in some degree subsided, but that she had no other alternative, the chamber she occupied being only accessible through the sitting-room, than to remain exposed to the stare of a number of the other prisoners, or return to him, to which, of course, she gave the preference.

Having, with all the calmness she could assume, and looks purposely averted from his, enquired after her mother, who had lain down before she went out, she

was gliding along the side of the room to her chamber, when Munro hastily approaching, seized her by the arm, and drawing her towards a window....

‘Elizabeth,’ said he, in a tone almost of sternness, and fixing his penetrating eyes on her face, ‘I have just witnessed a scene that requires explanation.’

Elizabeth started....her cheek alternately faded and flushed....every look evinced distress and confusion. At length, after the hesitation of a few minutes, she attempted to stammer out something of having been mistaken for another person.

Her father looked at her with still more scrutinizing earnestness....‘Elizabeth,’ said he, in an accent such as he had never before addressed her in, ‘no prevarication....By Heaven, I’ll have the truth.’

Shocked and alarmed, Elizabeth dropt kneeling at his feet; still, however, she endeavoured to avoid the explanation he demanded. Her efforts to do so, however, proved unavailing; the paternal anxiety of her father was too much awakened, to permit him to allow of any evasion; and by degrees the whole of Lord O’Sinister’s conduct towards her was unfolded to him.

The emotions to which the disclosure gave rise, may easier be conceived than described; with horror at her narrow escape from the snares of the villain, was mingled indignation and rage, at the desceptions practised on himself, which the particulars she gave, or, more correctly speaking, he extorted from her, fully elucidated. For a few minutes he felt too bewildered, too agitated, to be able to articulate more than, like Goldsmith’s good-natured man....

‘How have I been deceiv’d!’

With fervent piety his heart then ascended in thanksgiving to Heaven, for the preservation of his child.... ‘Oh thou,’ he cried, one hand resting on the shoulder of the weeping and still kneeling Elizabeth, the other raised in a supplicating attitude.... ‘Oh thou, who hast hitherto protected the innocence of my child, still, still vouchsafe to make her thy care! Should it be thy divine will to call me hence, ere the allurements of youth and beau-

ty are faded, oh, raise her up some tender guardian to supply my place, and guard her from the perils to which they expose her !'

It was settled that nothing should be said to her mother respecting the baseness of Lord O'Sinister. Nothing, however, could, prevent Munro from writing an upbraiding letter to him, in which, after fully expatiating on the enormity of his conduct, he bade him beware, if he wished to avoid being held up to the contempt he merited, of again insulting his daughter.

From this period, another six weeks passed away, without any thing occurring to interrupt in any degree the now tiresome monotony of their days ; at the expiration of which, Munro found himself so cruelly embarrassed, as to decide upon addressing his father. At first he resolved on concealing from his wife and daughter his application to him, lest it should inspire hopes that might expose them to disappointment ; but the agitation into which penning it threw him, took from him the power of adhering to this resolution.

The day after he dispatched it, an answer was returned. Munro attempted to open it, but the agitation occasioned by the idea of perusing a letter that would in all probability, decide his fate, was so great, that he was under the necessity of resigning it to Elizabeth, who was alone present.

Their astonishment at its contents was unspeakable, nor was their anguish less ; but ere these are mentioned, it is necessary to relate, that a short period before the imprisonment of Munro, one dreary night, when the whirling tempest raved along the heath, and foul and fierce all winter drove along the darkened air, a gendeman and his servant, on horseback, missing the beaten track over it, applied at the house of Munro for directions of regaining it.

Munro, whose native hospitality and benevolence nothing could impair, not satisfied with giving them the required information, kindly invited them to alight, and take shelter in his dwelling, till the fury of the storm had abated.

His invitation was joyfully accepted ; the servant was

sent to enjoy the comforts of his kitchen fire, and the master brought in to participate in those of his parlour.

Scarce had he entered it, ere Munro recognized in him an old acquaintance, of the name of Macintosh, a Baronet, residing in the neighbourhood of Glengary.

This recognition, however, led to no conversation of a particular nature, nor produced any alteration in the manner of either....One still remained lively and communicative, the other courteous and unembarrassed.

The mind of Munro was just at this juncture too much occupied by the unpleasantness of his situation, to permit him to dwell on any thing which did not immediately concern himself; he, therefore, scarcely bestowed a thought on Sir James after he had quitted his habitation.

But not so Sir James....his thoughts continued to hover round the dwelling of Munro, long after he had taken his departure from it: in a word, the beauty of Elizabeth had made a complete conquest of his heart; and of no object but her could he think, at least with any degree of pleasure to himself.

He was at this period somewhat advanced in life, and in his person betrayed both the ravages of time and dissipation, to which he had always been inclined; but without suffering his propensity to it to involve him in any difficulties, his avarice and ambition being fully equal to his passion for pleasure.

Fortune smiled not on his youth, but love made amends for her deficiencies; his then handsome figure and insinuating address so recommending him to the good graces of a lady of large fortune, near Glengary, but unpossessed of any attractions but what she derived from that fortune, as to induce her to bestow her hand on him. Contrary to his expectations, and with equal truth it might be said, his wishes, (for she was considerably older than himself,) she continued to maintain her post in this world at the period which again introduced Munro to his knowledge. Notwithstanding this circumstance, however, he would have had no hesitation in endeavouring to create for himself an interest in the fair bosom of Elizabeth, but that he feared dangerous consequences might result to him, from deceiving the daughter of such a man as Munro.

A few days previous to the receipt of Munro's letter at Glengary, his matrimonial fetters were broken by the hand of death. Scarcely did he find himself freed from them, ere he conceived the project of endeavouring at once to gratify both his love and his avarice, by trying to prevail on Mrs. Munro to persuade her husband to make Elizabeth his heiress, and bestow her on him.

That he knew he had some influence with Mrs. Munro, or he never would have thought of such a project, may readily be supposed. She had for years been a constant visitor at his house, the servile homage she paid Lady Macintosh, in order to obtain the countenance of a woman of her rank and respectability in the neighbourhood, having rendered her a great favourite with her Ladyship, whose pride was excessive; and Sir James, from his wish to stand well with all who could in any degree contribute to his gratification, had the address to persuade her she was equally esteemed by him.

Convinced by this conduct that he had attached her to his interest, no sooner had he seen the remains of his lady consigned to the spot where he had been long wishing to see them deposited, than he requested a private audience of Mrs. Munro, in which he briefly revealed the purpose for which he had desired it; and pledged himself, if she succeeded in the business he wished her to undertake, to make not only a handsome addition to her jointure, but to let her retain possession of the mansion-house during her life, and in every respect treat her as the head of the family.

Pride and selfishness were Mrs. Munro's governing principles; it cannot, therefore, be supposed she had any hesitation in agreeing to do what promised so amply to gratify both. In the efforts she made for accomplishing the wishes of Sir James, and to which she pretended to her credulous husband, she was merely stimulated by a sense of justice and humanity, she quickly succeeded.

In consequence, a letter was on the point of being dispatched to his long discarded and cruelly persecuted son, at the moment his arrived at Glengary.

The answer returned to his application was dictated

by Sir James, and written by Mrs. Munro, her husband having long been under the necessity of employing an amanuensis; and briefly stated that he, Mr. Munro, being disinclined to visit the sins of the father upon the children, had decided upon making his granddaughter his heiress, provided she consented to accept the hand of Sir James Macintosh, (of whose wealth, consequence, and virtues, an exaggerated account was given,) in which case, but on no other condition, his affairs should be arranged, and a proper provision made for him and his family.

To describe what Elizabeth felt at the perusal of this letter, at finding, as it were, the fate of her parents put into her hands, and that without making a sacrifice no less painful in her idea than would have been that of life, there was no hope...no prospect of their being restored to liberty, or any other comfort, would be impossible.

Recoiling from making this sacrifice, yet almost ashamed of doing so, she sought to avoid the looks of her father, lest she should read reproach and indignation in them, for her hesitation on the subject.

His disposition, however, was too disinterested, to permit him to feel either angry or indignant at this circumstance; nor from his knowledge of the strength of her attachment to Delacour, did he feel any surprise at it. For the first time, however, he wished, but in silence, that this attachment had not existed, since nothing, he almost felt persuaded, from the style of the letter just received, but her compliance with the wishes of her grandfather, could obtain for him any change of situation.

He determined, however, not to let despair prevent his making another effort for the purpose; accordingly, as soon as he had dissipated the terrors under which he saw poor Elizabeth trembled, he addressed another letter to his father, stating the engagement between her and Delacour, and conjuring him, in the most energetic terms, not to let her refusing to break a vow, which honour and generosity alike demanded her keeping, since nothing could be more disinterested...more noble than the con-

duct of her lover, prevent him from rendering him the assistance he required.

Elizabeth tried to hope this letter would have the wished-for effect; but if it should not her heart almost died within her at the idea. How then was she to act?.... 'Relinquish hope....relinquish happiness.....relinquish Delacour?' was her response to this self-interrogatory, in the solitude of her chamber, and the hour of darkness and despair....Yes, if nothing but her acquiescence to the proposal of her grandfather could obtain the enlargement of her father, she solemnly vowed to comply with it.

CHAP. XVIII.

..... 'How sinks his soul!
What black despair, what horror fill his heart!'

THOMSON.

MUNRO, too well acquainted with the stubborn nature of his father, to imagine he would give up a measure on which he appeared to have set his heart, and unsuspecting of the resolution Elizabeth had formed, the subject being too painful for her to touch on, could no longer make a struggle against despair. Want already stared him in the face, and the horrors its approach excited were aggravated by the languishing state of Mrs. Munro's health and his anticipation of what the sufferings of Elizabeth would in all probability be, should she, as now appeared likely to be the case, be left an orphan ere the return of Delacour. The gloom of his mind infected his manners, and communicated itself to his countenance; he could no longer force himself to converse; no longer command a smile; the society of his wife and daughter ceased to charm, and in the most retired parts of the grounds attached to the prison, he now passed those hours he had heretofore devoted to them.

Elizabeth, ignorant of what was really passing in his mind, imputed the sudden alteration in his manners to

displeasure, at her having had any hesitation on a point which concerned his happiness and her mother's.

'He accuses me, in all probability,' she cried to herself, 'of selfishness....deems me unworthy, perhaps, of the tenderness he has so long lavished on me....' the idea almost rived her heart....' But his cruel father, perhaps,' she continued, 'will furnish me with an opportunity of proving to him that I am not entirely engrossed by self.... Oh, should he,' with all the wildness of despair she added, 'at what a price....at what a dreadful price shall I regain his good opinion!'

An answer was returned to Munro's second application the evening after it was sent. Their frugal dinner over, Mrs. Munro had withdrawn to her humble couch, which she was now seldom able to quit for any length of time, and only he and Elizabeth, at the moment of its delivery, were together, seated at a distance from each other, silent, sorrowful, abstracted.

With something like a feeling of desperation....a feeling which gave a transient animation to his countenance, Munro broke the seal. A glance at the contents sufficed to convince him they were unfavourable, and dropping the letter, he struck his hand on his forehead, and instantly rushed from the room.

As he quitted it, Elizabeth rose from her seat, and with trembling knees (his emotion making her apprehend the worst) approached the chair he had occupied, and taking up the letter, glanced over it. For an instant she remained motionless, the picture of despair, then sinking on her knees....' Oh, Delacour !....beloved Delacour !' she exclaimed, clasping her hands together, 'must I then give you up ?....Is there no way of saving my family, but by my resignation of you ?....Alas ! I behold none ; and in breaking the vow I fondly plighted to you, I plant thorns in my bosom, which must for ever rankle there. Since thus doomed to part, would that we had never met....never met !' she repeated with a burst of anguish, and drawing from her bosom his picture.... that picture which had so long been pressed against the heart where his image was enshrined....so often addressed and wept over....' Ah, Heavens ! how little did he

imagine, when he sent me this, the hour would ever arrive in which I should have uttered such a wish !'

Her contemplation of the likeness of her lover did not tend to assuage her anguish ; she pressed it involuntarily, and with agonizing tenderness, to her pale and quivering lips....she deluged it with her tears....she held it to her heart, as if she never, never meant again to take it thence, while with a despairing look her eyes were raised towards Heaven, as if, like the unhappy Juliet, demanding ' whether there was no pity sitting in the clouds, that saw into the bottom of her grief ?'

Her thoughts at length reverting to her father....to the air of distraction with which he had quitted the room, she hastily arose, and not without bitterly reproaching herself for having so long delayed to follow him, hastened to the solitary haunt he was wont to frequent.

The gloom of twilight had already fallen o'er the scene, and a cold and savage blast howled mournfully through the old and leafless trees that shadowed the spot. She found him pacing the ground, with an air that too evidently proclaimed the dreadful agitation of his mind.

' Oh ! my dear father,' she instantly exclaimed, in accents of mingled tenderness and melancholy, ' what an evening is this for you to be out !...let me conjure you to come in.'

Munro, for the first time shrinking from her, on her attempting to take his arm, motioned with his hand for her to leave him.

' Oh, I cannot....cannot !' she cried....' I cannot think of leaving you exposed to such a storm as this.'

Again Munro waved his hand for her to quit him....' No,' said he, in a tone of sternness and solemnity : ' the storm within,' and he struck his breast, ' renders me insensible to that without ; but even if this were not the case, my life is now of too little consequence, too wretched, to permit me to be anxious to preserve it....he who looks forward without hope, can scarcely be anxious to avoid death. Like a blasted tree, I have withered, no more to revive ; and the sooner I drop, the better.'

Elizabeth's alarm increased....she looked earnestly in his face....his eye was wild....his cheek of a sallow pal-

ness....of the brightness of his countenance not a trace remained.

'Oh, should the sacrifice I am about making be made too late to save him!' she internally exclaimed.

Shuddering at the fearful idea, she clung to his arm....'Oh, my father!' she cried, 'despair not of yet enjoying happier days....I no longer hesitate to submit to the will of my grandfather. From the moment I understood it, I made up my mind to acquiesce in it, provided his assistance could not be otherways obtained.... Oh! could you think,' she added, seeing her father regarding her with a look of mingled incredulity and wonder, 'that I could know myself possessed of the power of obtaining your liberty, and yet refuse exercising it?'

Munro no longer doubting her sincerity, clasped her to his heart....'Many daughters have done virtuously,' he exclaimed, as he strained her to his bosom, while tears of tenderness, gratitude, pity, and regret, gushed from him, and bedewed her pale cheek; 'but thou.... oh! thou, my Elizabeth, excellest them all, for well I know what it must cost thee to make the sacrifice thou hast promised.'

'I....I will not deny,' returned Elizabeth, in faltering accents, 'that it is a painful one; 'tis due to Delacour, 'tis due to my own character, to acknowledge that I cannot break my engagement to him without a pang. But oh, my father, have you not instructed, have you not taught me to believe, that virtue will still pour balm o'er the wounds inflicted by the sacrifices she demands of us?'

'Yes, assuredly; the sorrows of virtue are still followed by her consolations: but, my Elizabeth, lest you should be tempted to imagine the nature of your father changed, that selfishness has at length gained dominion over him, I protest to you, in the awful sight of Heaven, that nothing but consideration for your mother, nothing short of being convinced she must sink beneath her present sufferings, if not speedily alleviated, could induce me to permit the sacrifice you have decided on.'

He no longer delayed returning to his apartment, which he had no sooner entered, than he sat down to an-

swer the letter from Glengary : with pain...with anguish of heart he wrote it, too well acquainted with the nature of Elizabeth not to know what she must suffer on the present occasion ; too sincerely attached to Delacour.... the warm-hearted and noble Delacour, not to be agonized by the idea of what he would feel, when he should hear of her broken vow, her violated faith....in short, her resolution, far from lessening his wretchedness, only changed the nature of it. Of this Mrs. Munro was now informed, but without any comment on the pain attending on it. Like her husband, however, she had too perfect a knowledge of the disposition of Elizabeth, not to know what her feelings relative to it must be ; and as nothing but consideration for her could have induced him to acquiesce in it, so nothing but a conviction, that a much longer continuance in prison would prove fatal to him, could have occasioned her to do so.

Munro's letter to Glengary brought the transported Sir James to D..... the next morning, with a letter from the old gentleman, enclosing a bank note of fifty pounds, but stating, that in consequence, of the evidently reluctant acquiescence, his proposal of uniting her to the Baronet had met with, he had decided on not liberating him, till the marriage of Elizabeth had taken place.

The base, the ungenerous distrust this letter manifested his father harbouring of him, roused all that was fiery and indignant in the nature of Munro. The presence of Sir James, however, made him quickly endeavour to subdue the emotion it excited.

After expatiating some time on the pain he felt at the idea of his having suffered so much, and the happiness he should derive from endeavouring to prove himself worthy of his future confidence and friendship, Sir James requested to be indulged with an interview with his fair mistress, who, on the announcement of his name, had precipitately, with her mother, left the room.

Since matters had proceeded thus far, Munro, conceiving it but right that he should be gratified, repaired to Elizabeth. He found her in a state of the most painful agitation ; but though every feeling revolted at the idea of seeing Sir James, of listening to a declaration which ne-

ver....never, she felt persuaded, could again be pleasing to her ear, she refused not complying with his request, but let her father lead her to the room, since, like him, she could not avoid acknowledging, that since she had consented to accept the addresses of Sir James, propriety demanded her acting so as to conceal her repugnance to them; but notwithstanding this, involuntarily, and with averted eyes, she shrunk back, on his attempting to take her hand from her father. He persisted, however, in leading her to a seat, spite of her too evident distress, with a cheek flushed with rapture, for Sir James was incapable of feeling for any mortal but himself, thanked her, in the most high-flown terms, for consenting to render him the most enviable of men, and assured her the study of his life should be to evince his gratitude.

Elizabeth tried to listen to him with composure; but when he ventured to press for an early day, and artfully represented the necessity there was for it, by mentioning her grandfather's determination relative to her father, and which he pretended he had vainly attempted to alter, she could no longer controul her feelings. Snatching away her hand, she started up, and flew from the room, in an agony too great for description. But scarcely had she left it, ere tenderness for her parents induced her to return, and falter out an apology for having quitted it so abruptly.

Sir James, whatever might be the displeasure he felt, and that he felt some was probable, as he was an irritable man, at an emotion which augured his being more than indifferent to her, let nothing be seen in his looks and manner but smiles and softness; he again led her to a seat, expressed the deepest regret for the sudden indisposition to which he affected to impute her recent conduct, and finally by degrees revived the subject which had been thus interrupted; and had, at length, the supreme felicity of receiving a promise from her to become his in the course of a few days, but accompanied by a request, to be excused seeing him again, till the one appointed for their marriage....a request which, after her ready acquiescence to his wishes, Sir James could not avoid complying with.

The disgust which Elizabeth felt at the flaming declarations of Sir James, united to her wish for an uninterrupted opportunity of endeavouring to reason herself in some degree to a fate that now seemed inevitable, was her motive for this request.

But in vain did she endeavour to reason with herself; the nearer the hour approached, in which to dwell longer on the idea of Delacour, that idea which she had so long, so fondly cherished, would be criminal, the more wretched she became. No tear, no sigh, however betrayed to her parents what she suffered; nor was a tear, a sigh, requisite to do so; her countenance was the faithful index of her heart, and with unutterable anguish, from its sad expression, they perceived that at the shrine of filial duty she was about sacrificing every hope of earthly happiness.

Munro's anguish was rendered still more poignant than his wife's by the observations which he had opportunities of making on Sir James, and which inclined him to believe he was one of those selfish characters, who make their own gratification their first, if not sole consideration, and with whom, of course, it was not to be imagined a person of so very opposite a nature as was Elizabeth, could ever enjoy felicity.

Still, however, notwithstanding this surmise, the situation of her mother withheld him from desiring to see her recede from her newly-formed engagement; and there were moments in which he tried to sooth his agonizing mind, by indulging a hope that her gentle virtues, her unaffected sanctity, and sweetness of disposition, would have too powerful an effect upon Sir James, not to permit the fulfilment of this engagement to obtain her some degree of happiness.

Such was the substance of the story which Stubbs, in his plain, though prolix manner, related to the deeply-interested and agonizing Osmond. We shall not dwell on the frequent interruptions it received from him, neither the alternate bursts of passion and of sorrow it excited; suffice, that on its conclusion, he might with truth have said....

*'There's not a wretch that lives on common charity,
But's happier far than me.'*

In vain did Stubbs, who, as he proceeded in his narrative, had gradually raised himself in his estimation, by the part which, notwithstanding his unostentatious spirit, he could not avoid acknowledging he had taken in the concerns of his family, endeavour to assuage his anguish, and prevail on him to partake of the frugal fare set before him. His artless eloquence was unavailing, and, at length, silenced, by Osmond's telling him, after he had gratefully thanked him for his attention, that the greatest kindness he could at present confer on him, would be to let him take possession of the chamber he had so hospitably offered him.

The principal part of the night, for he neither thought of undressing or reposing, was passed, by Osmond, in pacing the narrow limits of his chamber, mourning over the misery of his family.

'Unhappy parents,' he repeatedly exclaimed, 'what must you not suffer at beholding the wretchedness of your daughter! and you, my dear, dear sister, would to Heaven, by the sacrifice of myself, I could save you from that you are about making!'

Was there no way, he considered, by which this sacrifice might be prevented? might not an appeal to the honour, the sensibility of Sir James, or a representation in person on the subject to his grandfather, avert it?

'But no, no,' with all the wildness of despair, he replied to himself, 'Sir James has not feelings that can be moved by an appeal of the kind, or he never could have acted as he has done; nor the obdurate parent of my father, a particle of humanity in his disposition, or he never would have taken advantage of the distress of his son, to doom his child to misery!'

But the contemplation of this misery was not his only source of anguish at present; the idea of what he was thoroughly convinced Delacour would suffer, at losing Elizabeth, scarcely less tortured him.

'Oh why, why,' in agony he exclaimed, 'must a love like theirs be rent asunder! Oh, Delacour, dear and inestimable friend, must the cup of sorrow be administered to thee by friends, to whom thy happiness is so precious!'

At the first dawn of day he quitted his chamber, tea-

patient to set out for D..... Stubbs, however, could not immediately attend him thither; he was, therefore, forced to curb his impatience, as, without his return being cautiously announced to his family, he could not think of appearing before them, lest, in the present agitated state of their feelings, seeing him abruptly might be attended with fatal consequences; especially as he knew there was nothing they less expected at this moment, owing to their having, Stubbs informed him, received the letter he wrote from Naples, stating his being to all appearance settled there for life, and expressing his hope of their shortly joining him in that kingdom.

To while away the tedious moments he was obliged to wait for the farmer, or rather avoid that observation so irksome to the suffering heart, he strolled into the garden, and from thence to a wild and savage part of the heath, where, at this early hour, every thing looked cold, bleak, and dismal. The summits of the immense mountains, viewed from hence, rugged with rocks, and patched with a rank and mournful grass, and appearing, from the undulating horizon they formed, as if, (to make use of the words of a modern writer, in speaking of similar ones) ‘impelled and driven onward in immense waves and broken swells,’ were yet veiled in heavy clouds, while the mists and exhalations of morning returned in streaming showers upon the vallies that intersected them, heightening their dreariness almost to horror.

The sympathetic gloom of every object was, however, infinitely more consonant to the present feelings of Osmond, than a livelier scene would have been; and he accordingly continued wandering about, gazing on the well-remembered haunts of his childhood, with a sensation of mingled bitterness and pleasure, till Stubbs came in quest of him, to inform him he was ready to attend him to D.....

Midway between it and Heathwood they met a chaise and four, driving rapidly towards the latter place, from which, as it passed, Osmond was much surprised at hearing himself called. He stopped; the chaise did so at the same moment, and with sensations impossible to be described, he beheld Delacour.

‘Good Heavens! do my senses deceive me!’ cried Delacour, bursting open the door, and springing out, ‘or have I really the happiness of seeing you....still seeing you in the land of the living! O, my dear, dear fellow,’ shaking Osmond by the hand, with all the cordiality of friendship, ‘what have I not suffered on your account! The idea of your dismal fate made me dread, as much as long, to behold your family: but no more, at least at present, of past sorrows....this blessed moment more than compensates for all. Come, you must turn back with me; and as we proceed to Heathwood, gratify the anxiety I feel, to know by what miracle, for to nothing less can I think your preservation owing, you escaped the merciless waves that swallowed up the frigate you were in.’

‘You shall hear all, my dear friend,’ returned Osmond; ‘but you must order the chaise to turn, for....for,’ involuntarily hesitating, ‘my family have left Heathwood.’

‘Left Heathwood!’ echoed Delacour, in an accent indicative of the greatest surprise; ‘what that dear little snug retreat your father was so fond of! but I trust they have not removed to any great distance from it.’

‘No, not a great way,’ replied Osmond, with forced composure; ‘but order the carriage to turn, and take us to the inn at D.....’

Then drawing Stubbs aside, he, in a low voice, requested him to hasten to his father, cautiously break his return, and inform him, but without touching on the incident that had just taken place, that he would shortly be with him.

‘Good God!’ exclaimed the warm-hearted Delacour, with a burst of grateful joy, on Osmond’s taking a seat beside him, ‘how little did I imagine, at the commencement of this day, such happiness was in store for me, as I now enjoy, from seeing you again in health and safety!....Yet great as it is,’ he added, after a transient pause, and with a half sigh, ‘it is not perfect. The idea of returning to your sister, only rich in love, prevents its being so. The hopes with which I quitted England have been disappointed. Instead of making the prosperous

voyage I expected, ere I had compleated it, the ship I commanded, in consequence of the injury it sustained, in an engagement with two larger vessels of the enemy, which we had the satisfaction, however, of thinking we revenged in a manner that must prevent their shortly making another, foundered; and my brave companions and I must have gone to the bottom, but for a frigate bound for England, that suddenly hove in sight, the fleet with which we set sail from Portsmouth being dispersed by heavy gales. My ship, as you may perceive, glancing with a half smile at his arm, which Osmond, now for the first time, perceived in a sling, 'was not all that suffered in the battle with the *Monsieurs*.'

All hope of Delacour's being able to prevent the sacrifice of his sister, destroyed by this statement, Osmond felt himself more wretched than ever, so painful to his feelings was the idea of the task, which he saw had devolved to him, of acquainting him with the loss of Elizabeth.

After a little deliberation, he resolved on being silent on the subject, till they had reached the inn, and then, on practising a little deception on Delacour, by informing him Elizabeth was already married, lest otherwise he should attempt to obtain an interview with her, and thus augment the wretchedness of all parties.

'Is there an absolute necessity for our stopping at D.....?' asked Delacour suddenly, and with an anxious look.

Oppressed by the most agonizing sensations, Osmond, with difficulty, articulated.... 'Yes.'

'And why?' demanded Delacour, still more earnestly and anxiously.

'You shall....hear,' with involuntary hesitation, returned Osmond, 'as soon as we get to the inn.'

'To the inn!' repeated the impetuous Delacour. 'Dear Osmond,' suddenly grasping his arm, and looking in his face, 'you alarm me....your manner is constrained....your looks are embarrassed....more, distress is legible on every feature! if any evil awaits me, let me at once know it, for the tortures of suspense are not *endurable*.'

‘I conjure you to suspend for the present all further enquiries on the subject,’ cried Osmond, in the most supplicating accent, unwilling, from the agitation he was in, to commence yet awhile the story he had to relate.

‘Impossible....impossible! you might as well bid the wild waves be still, as bid me cease my enquiries till answered.’

‘See, D..... appears in sight,’ cried Osmond; ‘a few minutes more, and you shall be gratified, my dear Delacour.’

‘Well, now I trust,’ said Delacour, on their entering an apartment, shutting the door, and turning towards Osmond as he spoke, ‘you will no longer hesitate releasing me from the rack on which you have placed me.’

‘Heaven can attest how unwillingly,’ returned Osmond, in accents of mingled solemnity and tenderness. ‘Oh Delacour, believe me I cannot give a pang to your heart, without inflicting a still severer one on my own. Many....many are the painful hours I have experienced, since we last parted; but this outdoes them all in bitterness, since it reduces me to the necessity of wounding the feelings of him, whom, as a brother, my soul loves. Elizabeth.....’

‘Drive me not to madness by pausing!’ exclaimed Delacour, the flush which impatience had given to his manly cheek yielding to a deathlike paleness, and his lips quivering through emotion. ‘Elizabeth! what....what of her?’

‘Is.....’

‘Dead!’ interrupted Delacour, ‘in a tone of horror, and evidently holding by a chair to prevent himself from sinking to the floor.

‘To you,’ returned Osmond, after the silence of a minute, and in a solemn and emphatic accent,

‘Ha!’ exclaimed Delacour, starting, and with an emotion that again crimsoned his cheek; ‘what say you?’ approaching Osmond; ‘Elizabeth not dead but to me! do you mean to insinuate that she is faithless....do you wish me to understand that she is.....’

‘Married,’ cried Osmond, with difficulty, and instantly turning from his gaze.

'Married....Elizabeth married!' repeated Delacour, after a silence of some minutes....a silence, which more forcibly than language could have done, proclaimed the shock the intelligence had given him. 'But,' after another pause, 'what a fool am I to be surprised at the news! for what attractions can I pretend to, that I should be astonished at not being able to fix the wavering affections of a volatile woman? You will oblige me,' he added, but evidently with difficulty, and in a tone of mingled irony and bitterness, 'by letting me know who my happy successor in her favour is?'

Osmond, but with reluctance, informed him.

'A Baronet!' resumed Delacour; 'well, my pride at least should be gratified by her not having sacrificed me to a meaner rival.'

'O Delacour,' cried Osmond, turning with quickness towards him, eager, from laudable pride, to vindicate his sister, of the selfishness, inconstancy, and vanity, which it was now evident Delacour imputed to her, 'could you look into her heart, you would find.....'

He paused....paused, owing to his suddenly reflecting on the cruelty he should be guilty of, in trying to justify Elizabeth in the opinion of her lover, since no doubt could be entertained, that in proportion to his esteem for her, would be his regret for her loss.

'Well,' resumed Delacour, after evidently waiting a few minutes for him to finish the sentence, 'could I look into her heart, what should I find there?....art, affectation, and vanity.'

'Let us wave the subject,' cried Osmond, greatly agitated; 'tis a most unpleasant one.'

'Truly so,' returned Delacour, 'as would, indeed, any other at the present moment, for I feel much fatigued; as I cannot, therefore,' pulling the bell as he spoke, 'any longer enjoy your company, I request you may not, on my account, delay rejoining your no doubt happy family.'

'My happy family!' almost groaned Osmond; 'Oh Delacour.....'

A waiter appearing, Delacour desired to be shewn to another room.

'Delacour, stop, for an instant, I implore you,' cried Osmond, alarmed by the wildness of his looks, and agitated at the idea of his shutting himself up to brood over his disappointment; 'surely,' catching him by the arm, as he was quitting the apartment, 'you do not mean to let us part in such a manner....you do not intend to let what has happened interrupt our friendship?'

'For ever,' returned Delacour, with a look of fierceness, and in a corresponding tone. 'Of your truth, your sincerity, I entertained not a higher opinion than I did of your sister's, and yet she has deceived....cruelly deceived me; I will not, therefore, put it in the power of another of the family to do so. From this period I trust the name of Munro will remain a stranger to my ear.'

'Time often conquers strong prejudices,' said Osmond; 'I will not, therefore, despair of your yet being convinced, that among your friends you do not rank more sincere ones than are those who bear it.'

'Perhaps so; but till that time arrives, I trust we shall never meet.'

'Greatly as my feelings are hurt by your treatment,' cried Osmond, 'yet I cannot....cannot bring myself to join in that wish.'

Delacour, without replying, made another effort to withdraw his arm from the grasp of Osmond, but which a sudden faintness that came over him rendered unavailing. Osmond, perceiving him change colour and stagger, hastily supported him to a couch.

'For Heaven's sake, my dear fellow,' he eagerly demanded, 'what is the matter?'

Delacour, without speaking, glanced at his wounded arm, and with a sensation of horror, Osmond beheld the scarf which supported it deluged in blood, occasioned by the bursting open of his wound, in consequence of the agitation he had experienced.

Osmond was hastening to procure him assistance, when he stopt him, to desire he would only ring for his servant, whose attendance, he added, was all that was requisite.

Osmond obeyed. As soon as the arm of Delacour

was bound up, and a glass of wine administered to him by the hand of Osmond, whose attentions appeared to have an effect upon him, he with difficulty avoided acknowledging, he again moved towards the door, for the purpose of quitting the room.

'Delacour, ere you retire, will you not tell me whether I may not hope to see you again?' said Osmond, following him.

'I mean to quit this place almost immediately,' replied Delacour.

'Indeed! then 'tis probable we shall not meet again, at least for a long, long period. Well....but,' with a deep sigh, 'tis our lot to suffer in this life....' then almost involuntarily tendering his hand, 'Delacour, will you not bid me farewell?'

'Oh, Osmond!' grasping his offered hand, 'why this?...You add to the pain I already labour under, by thus persisting to be kind....if you regard me, let us part now.'

'Adieu then!' cried Osmond....'May Heaven bless you, and health and happiness be your's!'

'Tis a good wish,' said Delacour, evidently struggling with his feelings, 'and I will echo it. Osmond, notwithstanding what has happened....what I have said, trust me, I shall ever rejoice at hearing of your welfare; and not only of your's, but (for I am not vindictive) of her's who.....' He paused for an instant in evident agony, and then proceeded....'Yes, though she has blasted my hopes of happiness, may her's never perish....may she never, never experience a pang similar to that she has made me feel! Osmond, farewell! if we can ever meet again without pain, I shall not regret the circumstance; then dropping his hand, he quitted the room.

'Oh, never,' sighed Osmond to himself, as Delacour withdrew, 'will that period, I fear, arrive; we have therefore, in all probability, now met for the last time. Oh, Delacour! inestimable friend! thou, whom with truth I may say, I have worn in my heart's core....aye, in my heart of hearts, what can console me for the loss of thy society....thy friendship!'

As soon as the violence of his emotions had a little

subsided, he left the apartment, for the purpose of repairing to the prison of his father. In the hall he encountered Mactalla.

'Ah, Signor !' exclaimed he, in his usual manner, 'or Sir, as in future I shall style you, since we are now on British ground, I am glad I have met you, for there is the real Signor, Signor Barbarino, fretting and foaming to see you.'

'It is not in my power to wait on him at present; I therefore desire he may not know of my being here.'

Mactalla looked earnestly at his master for a minute without speaking, then suddenly turning on his heel, he darted to a door at the side of the hall, and throwing it open.... 'Signor Barbarino.... Signor Barbarino !' he exclaimed, to the utter amazement as well as displeasure of Osmond, who had never before known him to act in any other than the most submissive manner, 'here is my master.'

Osmond, in a frame of mind that could not permit him to brook trifling, was unable to suppress the anger and indignation this disobedience to his orders excited.

'How dare you, Sir,' cried he, darting a furious glance at Mactalla, 'act in such a manner ?'

'Nay, pray don't chide him, said Signor Barbarino, who on Osmond's being announced, had approached the door, and now laid his hand on his arm; 'what he has done has been in compliance with my wishes; let him not, therefore, suffer for his good-natured anxiety to oblige me.'

'If it was in my power, Sir,' cried Osmond, but still in a ruffled voice, 'to devote any time to you at present, I should not be angry with him for the manner in which he has acted; but I am at this juncture so particularly engaged, that it is not possible for me to do so.'

'I am sorry to hear that,' returned Signor Barbarino, 'for I hoped to have had your company this day at least; but indulge me with a few minutes conversation.'

Osmond reluctantly consented, and entering the parlour, the old gentleman closed the door.

'I have already been so fortunate,' continued he, 'as to discover the friends I came hither in quest of; and now

having forgot to mention you in the course of the conversation I have had with them, relative to recent events, their anxiety for an introduction to you is so great, that I shall feel myself much mortified if not able to gratify them, by prevailing on you to spend the day with us.'

'For the favourable report which has given birth to the anxiety you speak of, accept my acknowledgments, Sir,' said Osmond; 'but undeserving should I be of your favourable sentiments, (as I am confident you would yourself confess, did you know how I am situated at this moment,) were I to comply with your present wishes.'

'Why, you are not in any trouble, I hope!' demanded the old gentleman, fixing his still penetrating eyes on the countenance of Osmond.

Osmond involuntarily shook his head.

'Am I to understand,' rejoined Signor Barbarino, 'that you have been disappointed with regard to the situation in which you expected to find your family?'

Again a melancholy shake of the head was Osmond's only reply.

'Ah! I perceive you have,' resumed Signor Barbarino.... 'Trust me, I sincerely sympathize with you; but' and he paused for a moment, 'yielding to dejection can do no good; therefore, let me conjure you, my dear young friend, to exert yourself, be the trial you have just met with what it may, since fortitude under affliction is not only a proof of resignation to the will of the Supreme, (without whose divine permission no evil, we are taught to believe, can befall us,) but also one of the best we can give of understanding; it being a superlative folly, every one must allow, to complain of what is inevitable; for, as the sparks fly upward, so is man, sooner or later, destined to suffer.'

Osmond made no reply to this speech, or as he considered it at the moment, common-place harangue; but whilst listening to it, the following beautiful lines of Shakespeare recurred to his recollection:....

'Tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency

To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself.'

'I hope I shall be able to profit by your counsel, Sir,' said he, on the old gentleman's pausing.... 'And now,' making, as he spoke, a movement towards the door, 'I must bid you adieu for the present.'

'Well, if you must go, you must,' cried Signor Barbarino; 'but not that way, if you please,' beckoning him from the door towards which he had gone, to another on the opposite side of the room, and which as he spoke, he flung open. Osmond involuntarily glanced within the apartment thus displayed to his view; but scarcely had he done so, ere he started back in unutterable amazement, with a most a doubt of his being awake....almost a belief of his eyes having deceived him....a belief that perhaps the reader will not be surprised at his being inclined to yield to, when informed that they rested on his parents and his sister.

After a short and affecting pause....affecting, from the feelings to which it was owing, and during which, with truth it might be said,

'Forth at his eyes his spirits wildly peep'd....'

'Am I really awake?' he demanded, 'or do my senses deceive me?'

'Oh, my son!' now burst from the labouring bosom of Munro, as he advanced from the arm of the sofa, against which he had been leaning, and on which his wife and daughter, trembling with agitation, were seated.

Osmond heard no more....He rushed forward into the extended arms of his father....He passed from them into his mother's and sister's.

'Oh, moment of ecstasy!' cried Munro, as he beheld their mingling tears of joy, his own dropping at the sight, and his still fine countenance beaming with the gratitude with which his heart was filled to Heaven.... 'Oh, moment of ecstasy!' he repeated, on beholding his son improved in every grace, in figure, in feature, in manly beauty, what he already knew he was in disposition and accomplishments, namely, all that the fondest, proudest

father could desire, 'how amply do ye recompence me for past sufferings!'

'But tell me, tell me,' said Osmond, in the scarce audible voice of strong emotion, and suddenly disengaging himself from the embraces of his mother and sister, 'tell me,' glancing from his father at Signor Barbarino, 'how....by what means did that most benevolent of men, for to him I clearly perceive we are indebted for our present happiness, learn your situation, or become interested in it?'

'Ask nature,' replied Signor Barbarino, in an emphatic voice, and laying his hand on his bosom, while tears rolled down his furrowed cheeks.

'Nature!' repeated Osmond, with encreasing emotion, and again a wildness in his looks, which were now entirely bent on the old gentleman....'Are you then connected with us?'

'By the title of father,' returned Signor Barbarino, approaching Mrs. Munro, and falling on her neck....'In your long suffering mother you behold my daughter, my only and beloved, though long discarded child....in your family, the friends whom I came hither to seek, the friends, the relatives with whom I hope to pass the remnant of my days. My sorrowing and repentant spirit has already been soothed by their kindness and forgiveness; and could I hope that the prejudice which past transactions must have inspired you with against me would not be lasting, I should again feel happy, in consequence of their conduct.'

'He must have a malignant disposition indeed,' cried Osmond, with all his wonted animation, 'whom repentance and atonement cannot soften....The forgiving parent of my mother, the friend....the liberator of my father, is entitled to my warmest gratitude, my tenderest affection. Either my feelings must greatly alter, or I do not know myself aright, if one of the most delightful studies of my life, will not be to evince, by actions, what I owe him.'

'Oh! thou,' cried Signor Barbarino, or as we shall in future style him, Don Alphonso de Xerxes, (his real name,) his eyes uplifted towards Heaven, 'who by per-

mitting me to enjoy this happiness, hast given me to hope my repentance is accepted by thee, for ever bless and prosper this youth!" Then turning towards Osmond.... "By actions also," he continued, "will I endeavour to prove the sincerity of my regard for you.... Henceforward....."

"O, my dear Sir," interrupted Osmond impatiently, and grasping his hand, "in rescuing those I love from misery....in giving me the power," his thoughts suddenly reverting to Delacour, "of saving the noblest heart that Heaven ever enshrined within a human breast, from breaking, you have already done for me all that I can wish. O, Delacour!....beloved Delacour!" in a transport of joy he exclaimed, "is it then given me to heal the wound, I agonized myself by inflicting on you!"

CHAP. XIX.

* Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history.*

SHAKESPEARE.

WHILST Osmond was answering the eager inquiries which his declaration relative to Delacour excited, himself restless, wretched and impatient, ordered a chaise to be got ready to take him from D..... Some time elapsed ere this order was obeyed, and just as he was on the point of stepping into it, an old gentleman advanced from the inn, and entreated to be favoured with the vacant seat, having, he said, vainly tried throughout the neighbourhood to procure another for himself, and being under an indispensable engagement to set out for London immediately.

In the present state of his mind, Delacour could ill brook the thoughts of a companion; he therefore hesitated a few minutes ere he replied to this entreaty, when the natural benevolence of his disposition getting the better of him, he assented.

More, however, he could not prevail on himself to do. As the carriage rolled off he informed the stranger he must excuse his not entering into conversation, being too indisposed at the moment to be equal to any exertion; then closing his eyes, he leant back in a corner of it, and resigned himself to the agonizing reflections then prevailing in his mind.

Absorbed in these, he neither remarked the length of way they travelled without stopping, nor the gradual approach of night, till roused from his reverie, by being asked by the stranger whether he would not alight: upon which starting as if from a dream, he looked about him, and found the chaise before a house, which a faint ray of light streaming from a window rendered just visible,

'This is the stage at which we are to put up for the night,' said the old gentleman; 'we have had a long sitting, and it is time now that we should have some refreshment.'

Delacour, without making any reply to this observation, mechanically alighted, and followed him into the house. They were ushered into a neat parlour, well lighted, and where a cheerful fire sent forth an animating blaze.

'This is comfortable indeed, cried the old gentleman, rubbing his hands with an air that proclaimed his really thinking so. 'All we now want is a good supper.... pray, Sir, may I ask what you would like to have?'

'You would oblige me, Sir,' returned Delacour, somewhat impatiently, 'by not consulting me on the subject; order what you please, and trust me I shall be satisfied.'

'Well, Sir, I shall do as you wish,' slightly bowing, and ringing the bell.

Delacour, pacing the room with disordered steps, and folded arms, heeded not who obeyed this summons, till again addressed by the old gentleman.

'For a minute, Sir,' said he, 'may I request your attention?'

Angry at being, as he conceived, teased, Delacour paused, and was on the point of saying he must excuse his sitting down to supper with him, when the faculty

of speech was for an instant suspended, by the object that met his gaze as he turned towards him.

Elizabeth, pale, trembling, and evidently agitated to a degree that rendered her scarcely able to support herself, stood leaning against the side of the fireplace.

‘Gracious Heaven !’ at length he exclaimed, but still regarding her with wildness, ‘do not my senses deceive me ! do I see aright, or has my imagination, disordered by trouble, raised up this vision, to add to my tortures ?’

Elizabeth, with a faint smile, but without speaking, extended her hand to him, and the old gentleman instantly vanished from the room.

Instead of accepting her proffered hand, however, Delacour involuntarily retreated a few paces further from her.

‘Elizabeth,’ he cried, after regarding her for another minute in silence, and with still greater wildness, ‘explain the meaning of all this ! Why, why do I see you here ?....why with that countenance, after what has happened ? Surely it is not possible you could wish to witness the anguish you have inflicted ?’

‘Oh, Delacour ! now burst from the quivering lips of Elizabeth ; then after a momentary pause, ‘you will soon be convinced that I merit no reproaches from you....no doubt of my tenderness : yes, when you learn that the hand you once thought worth your acceptance, is still at my own disposal.’

‘Not married !’ interrupted Delacour, eagerly approaching her, then again involuntarily recoiling with a look of incredulity....‘Oh, Elizabeth ! after what I heard.....’

‘I am still, notwithstanding, your’s,’ she returned, with quickness, the paleness of her cheek giving place to a glowing blush....‘That....that is.....’ hesitating a little, and with something like a smile of archness, ‘provided I have no reason to believe you do not wish me to be so.’

‘Wish ! repeated Delacour with vehemence, and no longer attempting to resist the impulse of his feelings....

‘Wish !’ snatching her to his heart, and straining her to it some minutes in silence....‘Let this transport tell you

what I wish. But am I indeed to believe my present happiness real?....am I indeed to believe you single, and still inclined to render me the most blest of men? Nay, dearest Elizabeth,' observing her countenance lower a little at these words, 'pardon me. Only reflect on the sudden transition I have experienced from despair to hope, and you will not....cannot, I am certain, wonder that I should doubt the reality of the change....How, how, if it be real, can I reconcile to myself the conduct of your brother....the cruel....the agonizing deception he practised on me?'

'He is at hand, to account for that himself,' replied Elizabeth; 'and when you have heard him, you will, I am convinced, acknowledge that instead of being a cruel, it was a kind one.'

Ere Delacour could give utterance to the impatience he felt to see Osmond, for the purpose of receiving from him this desired explanation, the door opened, and Osmond made his appearance; his countenance beaming with the transports of his soul.

'Oh, Delacour!' hastily advancing towards him, and eagerly taking his hand, he exclaimed, 'as I shared in your sorrow, so do I now participate in your joy. In again having the happiness of looking forward to being connected with you by other ties than those of friendship, I find myself recompensed for many a sad and agonizing hour.'

Then entreating the greatly agitated Delacour to endeavour to compose himself, he briefly related the circumstances already known to the reader, and which, as Elizabeth had predicted, Delacour could not hear without acknowledging that his conduct towards him had been the very reverse of unkind.

'And will Don Alphonso, indeed,' cried Delacour, in an anxious tone, and with an emotion that recalled to his cheek the colour which illness and suffering had banished from it, 'will he indeed be generous enough to wave the pretensions he has so just a right to form for my Elizabeth, in favour of a person who has so little of *this world's* goods to endow her with?'

‘Oh, what a question!’ cried Osmond. ‘Where would be his honour, his justice, his generosity, if he hesitated for an instant fulfilling her father’s promise of giving her to you...you who so disinterestedly selected her for your bride, when there was but little prospect of fortune ever smiling on her. Oh, Delacour! trust me, Don Alphonso....But his actions will better speak for him than I can. Let the knowledge of his having been your companion hither, and this being Heathwood, dissipate all your doubts, if indeed you have any on the subject. In pursuance of his wishes to carry into effect a little plot he contrived as soon as he learnt you were at D....., for the purpose of heightening your surprise, I resisted my own to terminate immediately your unhappiness.’

‘Don Alphonso my companion from D.....,’ cried Delacour, in accents indicative of the greatest surprise, ‘and this Heathwood!’ then after the pause of a minute.... ‘Well, I acknowledge,’ with all his wonted animation, ‘my happiness is more perfect for having been a little delayed.’

Munro, his wife, and Don Alphonso, now entered; the scene that ensued may easier be conceived than described...suffice it to say, that on the transported Delacour’s turning to the latter, after having paid his compliments to the two former, the old gentleman taking him by the hand and affectionately pressing it.... ‘Your presence,’ said he, ‘was all that was wanting to render complete the happiness of this day. A few hours ago, and I imagined I could not think more highly of the sacrifice my granddaughter intended making for her parents than I then did; but since I have seen you, I won’t say,’ smiling a little archly, ‘conversed with you, I find her merit in agreeing to that sacrifice was even greater than I at first thought.’

Delacour attempted but in vain to make a suitable reply to this speech, so full was his heart at the moment; his looks, however, were eloquently expressive of what he felt.

As soon as composure was in some degree restored

to the party, they adjourned to another room, where an elegant supper was laid out for them. On the cloth being removed, and the servants withdrawn, a general explanation took place.

After having for a considerable period, but in vain, endeavoured to derive happiness from the gratification of his vanity, and stifle, in the hurry of dissipation, the voice of nature and of conscience, which incessantly reproached him for his conduct to his daughter; a daughter who never but in one instance had given him the smallest cause for displeasure, a lingering fit of illness brought him, Don Alphonso proceeded to inform his attentive auditors, to a proper way of thinking.

‘It was then,’ he continued, ‘when stretched as I imagined upon a death-bed, that reflection regained its wonted empire over me, and in the bitterness of the remorse it excited, I vowed to make all the atonement in my power for my past conduct.’

‘This vow, as soon as I recovered, would have occasioned me to set out for this kingdom; but that a very considerable part of my property was vested in the hands of a person in Naples.’

He then entered into a minute detail of the adventure which brought him and Osmond acquainted, and of the manner in which he had discovered his being his grandson.

‘Nothing but a fear of the knowledge,’ proceeded Don Alphonso, ‘of our connexion causing such a restraint in his manner, as might prevent my ascertaining whether or not his disposition was what appearances proclaimed it to be, and which I was most anxious for doing, withheld me from discovering myself to him, on learning who he was.’

‘My solicitude on this head satisfied, he should then have known our affinity; but that, like a whimsical old man, perhaps you will say, I became desirous of heightening, as much as possible, the surprise I was aware the communication of it would give him, and accordingly decided on delaying it till my arrival here; but with difficulty did I persevere in this resolution....with difficulty forbear falling on his neck, and calling him my son, when, as was often the case, in the course of con-

versation, he mentioned his parents, and by half-uttered sentences gave me too clearly to understand the anxiety with which his heart was racked about them.

‘The agitation which I experienced on alighting this place, in consequence of knowing I was then in the vicinity of those whom I so longed, yet dreaded, to see, from the prejudice, I naturally supposed they entertained against me, was so violent, as to induce me to determine on postponing the discovery I had to make till the morning, when I trusted I should be sufficiently composed to set about it in the manner I wished; and accordingly, therefore, suffered the companion of my journey to leave me, without giving him a hint of the secret with which my bosom laboured.

‘Just as I was on the point of rising this morning, a merry valet (but with a countenance at the moment that gave him no right to the appellation) entered my chamber. Hastily, and with alarm, I enquired what had happened to make him look so pale and melancholy; and he in reply very briefly informed me, that he had just learnt from a person in the inn, with whom he had just entered into conversation about the family of his master, of your being,’ glancing at Munro, ‘in confinement at D....., for debt.

‘I will not,’ continued Don Alphonso, ‘dwell on the scene that followed this information; suffice it to say that I lost no time in discovering myself to the honest and warm-hearted Mactalla, and setting about the procuring the liberation of those he was so interested about.’

In reply to Osmond’s enquiry, as to the manner in which this was accounted for to them, Don Alphonso said that he had sent a letter to his father, merely stating that his release was effected by the interposition of an old Spanish friend of Mrs. Munro’s, who was impatiently waiting at the inn to embrace her and her family.

‘On the scene that here again took place when we met, I shall no more dwell,’ cried Don Alphonso, ‘than I did on the one that preceded it. From your own feelings,’ and he looked alternately, and with almost excessive affection, at Osmond and Delacour, ‘ye can well,

convinced, picture to yourselves what that must have been, which took place between a penitent father and a forgiving daughter.....a long separated parent and child. Oh, at the moment in which my enfeebled arms again enfolded her....in which I again strained her to the heart from which I had so long strove to banish her, I felt compensated for years of suffering; yet at the same time convinced that I merited not only these, but years of suffering to come, for having for such a period remained inexorable to the voice of nature: but the Almighty is more merciful to man, than man is often to his kindred being....in his sight the tear of repentance drops not in vain, nor is the sighing of the contrite heart disregarded.

‘At the very moment in which you made your appearance,’ resumed Don Alphonso, after a short pause addressing his grandson, ‘we were on the point of dispatching a messenger to Heathwood in quest of you, some little alarm being excited in our minds by your delay in joining us.’

As soon as the emotions awakened by the above narrative were a little calmed, Osmond gave a brief account of all that had occurred in his recent visit to the scenes of his youth; and Delacour then satisfied the curiosity of his friends, by acquainting them with the circumstance that occasioned his returning home so much sooner than was expected.

Munro also stated, that, for being able to accommodate them so immediately at Heathwood, he was indebted to Farmer Stubbs, who, as soon as the transports he experienced at the happy revolution in his affairs had a little subsided, busied himself to get it in order for their reception.

The period fixed for the nuptials of Elizabeth with Sir James was yet four days off, and till its arrival it was decided, though not without some deliberation, and many arguments *pro* and *con*, that in order to render still more severe his merited disappointment, and that of his base coadjutor, no intelligence of what had passed should be dispatched to Glengary, from which, owing to the request of Elizabeth, they did not till then expect to see any one.

‘But since the wedding-day of my granddaughter has

of grateful transport, 'you are determined on adding the obligations I already owe you.'

'Well, I perceive you have no objection to my proposal,' resumed Don Alphonso.... 'Miss Munro,' he still jocosely to his granddaughter, 'it now rests with you to say, whether or not it shall be carried into effect.'

Elizabeth blushed, and bent her eyes.

'Silent!' rejoined her grandfather.... 'Well, C. Delacour, I have heard it said, that when ladies are without regard to certain questions, there is no room for despair.'

'I trust not, in the present instance, Sir,' cried Delacour, 'since I candidly confess, after being so near my Elizabeth, I shall not be able to divest myself of doubts and apprehensions, till I know she is positively resolved; still, notwithstanding this, I know not, invalid as I am, and he glanced at his wounded arm, 'how to.....'

'Plead your own cause,' interrupted Osmond.

'Exactly so,' said Delacour, 'and therefore must I treat.....'

'Others to do so for you, since too modest a female smiling a little ironically, 'to be able to do so yourself.'

'Well, I am much mistaken,' said Munro, directing his looks to Delacour, 'if the very circumstance causes you to hesitate in urging your wishes, is not

‘speak for Elizabeth, and say, that she acquiesces in the wishes of all here present.’

The scene closed by its being positively settled, that on the day which was to have given her to Sir James, she and Delacour should be united.

The intervening period was chiefly devoted by the family to making arrangements relative to their future mode of living. The fortune of Don Alphonso was noble, and it was decided that a residence suitable to it should immediately be sought for in some pleasant part of the kingdom; and that on obtaining it, Heathwood should be given up to Farmer Stubbs, as a reward for his fidelity and affection to its present possessors.

Of all his family, Osmond now only breathed the sigh of regret; neither present gaiety, nor anticipations of future promised splendour, nor expected change of scene, could for a moment detach his thoughts from the fair Cordelia, or weaken the anguish with which he dwelt on the disappointment of his hopes concerning her. Almost persuaded that to subdue his passion was beyond his power, there were times when he had it in contemplation to make his father acquainted with it, and entreat his interference with Lord O'Sinister; still, however, he was withheld from this measure, by the consideration of the rancorous hatred his Lordship bore him, the little likelihood, therefore, there was of his being prevailed on to acquiesce in his wishes, and the probability there was of exciting the resentment and indignation of his father, should he express an inclination to be allied to a man, who had meditated the dishonour of his family.

Relative to the adventures on the continent, in which he had been engaged with Lord O'Sinister, he meant to maintain an inflexible silence, lest, otherwise, if he touched upon them, he should be unable to conceal the feelings with which they had inspired him, and by the revealing of which, the full enormity of his Lordship's conduct towards him must be betrayed, which the consideration of his being the father of Cordelia rendered him most unwilling it should be; as also the, at present, unhappy state of his own mind.

Too much disturbed at this crisis, to be able at all

times to participate, as he wished, in the happiness of his friends, he contrived pretexts for withdrawing himself from them, and plunging amidst the

* Glimmering shades and sympathetic glooms*

of Firgrove, where he could uninterruptedly dwell on the idea so precious to his heart: but even the melancholy pleasure he derived from cherishing this idea was not always unalloyed. Convinced that in indulging a passion he had every reason to believe hopeless, he was guilty of a weakness highly censurable, the reproaches he incessantly, as well as involuntarily, made himself on the subject, embittered the delight he had in reflecting on Cordelia: still, however, notwithstanding these reproaches, he could not, or rather he would not, make an effort to tear her from his heart.

The morning previous to that fixed for their marriage, he was surprised by his sister and Delacour, in one of his lonely haunts at Firgrove.

'Upon my word,' cried Delacour, the moment he perceived him, shaking his head, and affecting a grave look, 'this looks suspicious!'

'What?' demanded Osmond hastily.

'Why, this passion for solitude. Come, my dear fellow, make your sister and me your confidants, for though no longer experiencing the pangs of hopeless love, we can nevertheless sympathise with those who do.'

'I make no doubt you can; but,' a little pettishly, 'notwithstanding, I shall not tax either the sympathy of one or the other.'

'Well, what is now rejected may yet perhaps be solicited, for though you have not all the marks of Rosalind's uncle upon you, whereby to know a man in love, yet still I cannot help suspecting that the little blind deity has not been entirely idle with regard to you.'

'Indeed! and pray may I ask what has given birth to such a suspicion?'

'Why, first, your being at a time of life when 'tis natural for a man to be in love....secondly, certain little absences in your manner....and thirdly, your evident

predilection for solitude. I shall soon begin to examine these shades narrowly, in expectation of finding 'odes upon hawthorns, and elegies on brambles,' deifying the name of some rural fair one.... But come,' changing his tone, 'to drop a subject which I see does not please you, know that your sister's motive and mine for coming in quest of you, was to communicate some intelligence which I have received by express from my aunt.... It will not, perhaps, surprise you to hear that Lord O'Sinister is dead; but it will, perhaps, to hear he died penitent.'

'Dead !.... Lord O'Sinister dead !' cried Osmond, in the greatest emotion, and involuntarily recoiling a few paces.... 'And his.....'

'His family,' resumed Delacour, on his pausing, 'have already returned from the continent.... they are now with my aunt.'

'And does she mention any particulars concerning them ?' asked, or rather faltered out Osmond.

'A few. Amongst other things, she informs me the death of Lord O'Sinister was owing to an affair of honour with Colonel C....., the officer whose wife he seduced some years ago, and who, on discovering the injury he had received from him, took a vow never to rest till he had revenged the same. To this vow was owing his Lordship's precipitate departure from England, and his travelling incog on the continent, under false pretexts ; but, notwithstanding the various stratagems he had recourse to for eluding it, vengeance at length overtook him ; Colonel C..... traced him to Naples, notwithstanding the circuitous way in which he pursued his journey thither, his frequent stoppages on the road, and travelling under a fictitious name. At the first shot, his avenging hand laid him low. The wound was immediately pronounced mortal ; nevertheless the unhappy man lived two days after receiving it, during which he manifested the greatest contrition for his past offences, and endeavoured to prove the sincerity of this contrition, by the manner in which he arranged his affairs. Amongst those to whom he conceived reparation, due from him I was ranked.... he bequeathed me a sum ade-

quate to what he was the means of my father's losing; but which bequest, I trust every one who knows me, will do me justice to believe, was not requisite to obtain my forgiveness when I heard of his repentance; for if repentance satisfies Heaven, as we are assured it does, how much more should it satisfy erring man!... But I am a bad hand at grave reflections, or sage remarks,' continued Delacour, laughing, as if at himself; 'suffice it, therefore, to say, that to have heard of his Lordship's regret for his misdeeds, would have been sufficient of itself to have made me obliterate them from my remembrance.'

'Good God!' exclaimed Osmond to himself... 'surely, surely if Lord O'Sinister wished in his last moments to make reparation to all whom he had injured, I could not have been forgotten by him.'

This idea made him look earnestly in the countenance of Delacour; but to his infinite mortification he read nothing there, calculated to confirm it, and his heart immediately sunk.

Making an effort, however, to conceal what was passing in his mind, he asked, with forced composure, whether Lady O'Sinister and her daughter were soon expected in the neighbourhood?

'Yes,' said Delacour, with seeming carelessness, turning from Elizabeth, with whom he was conversing, 'the nuptials of Miss Athelstone are to be solemnized the...'

'The nuptials of Miss Athelstone!' with difficulty repeated Osmond, and changing colour.

'Yes, like your obedient servant, she is now on the very eve of matrimony.'

'On the very eve of matrimony!' again repeated Osmond, staggering back a few paces, and catching hold of a tree for support.

'The intelligence seems to affect you,' said Delacour.

'Ye...s, with surprise,' stammered out Osmond; recollecting himself... 'I...I can't help being a little surprised that her marriage should take place so soon after the death of her father.'

'Tis in pursuance of his wishes,' returned Delacour. 'He willed away her hand, as I may say, in his last mo-

ments, and exacted a promise from her to fulfil the engagement he formed for her as soon as she arrived in England.

‘And pray, pray, may I ask,’ said Osmond, in a voice scarce articulate, and trembling between hope and fear, ‘who, who the person is to whom he has bequeathed so precious a gift?’

‘I really cannot tell you,’ answered Delacour; ‘but whoever he is, he is certainly an eviable being, for she is not only a very fine, but a very amiable girl.’

‘And....and,’ still more earnestly, more anxiously, enquired the agitated Osmond, ‘is she perfectly satisfied with her father’s election for her?’

‘O, perfectly, I understand from my aunt. She says she is convinced it will be a love match on both sides.’

‘A love match!’ repeated Osmond to himself; ‘and but a few weeks ago permitting me to hope I never could be forgotten....O woman! woman!’ striking his forehead, ‘false, deceitful woman!’ then recollecting himself again, and now more anxious than ever, from a motive of pride, to conceal his unhappy attachment, he was precipitately quitting the spot, when Delacour prevented him by catching his arm.

‘Nay, my dear fellow, you must not leave us,’ said he, ‘for since so near that magnificent mansion,’ glancing at the Hall, which they were now within sight of, ‘we mean to view the interior of it.’

‘Excuse me,’ cried Osmond, endeavouring to disengage his arm....‘Some other time.....’

‘Indeed I cannot,’ returned Delacour. ‘If you persist in leaving us, the suspicion I have just alluded to will not be weakened, I assure you.’

‘Well, lead on,’ said Osmond, endeavouring, but in vain, to smooth his ruffled brow, ‘and I will follow you.’

They accordingly proceeded to the house. On entering the hall, the house-keeper was summoned; she knew Elizabeth, and on conducting the party up stairs into a spacious gallery, left them, saying she was certain it must be more agreeable to them to view the apartments by themselves, than with her for their guide.

The gallery in which she left them was lined with mily portraits. Over these the eye of Osmond callously wandered, till at length, it became fixed, by suddenly discovering the picture of Miss Athelstone highly-finished likeness, representing her in all the pride of youth and beauty.

Osmond immediately became rooted to the spot.

‘What a heavenly portrait!’ observed Elizabeth, leaning on the arm of Delacour she also stopped to view it. ‘Certainly this must be some bright vision of his imagination, which the painter has here embodied for I never saw any creature in real life, so exquisitely beautiful.’

‘You are mistaken, I assure you,’ cried Delacour.... ‘This is the portrait of Miss Athelstone, and when you and Osmond see her, I make no doubt you will concur with me in opinion, that the artist has not done her more than justice.’

‘More than justice!’ repeated Osmond emphatically and again thrown off his guard, by the emotions this semblance of the fair Cordelia awakened in his bosom.... ‘oh, how impossible for pen or pencil to do her justice! And yet so lovely is the portrait, that, in the words of Shakespeare, I cannot forbear exclaiming....

..... ‘What demigod
Hath come so near creation? move these eyes,
Or whether riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are sever’d lips
Parted with sugar-breath. . . so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends: here, in her hair,
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
A golden mesh t’ entrap the hearts of men,
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes!...
How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfinished’

‘Come, come,’ cried Delacour, moving forward to Elizabeth, ‘you seem quite fascinated by that picture. If you take my advice, my dear fellow, you will gaze no longer on it, since the original is engaged.’

‘I believe you are right,’ said Osmond, affecting to laugh, and tearing himself, but not without a lingering look, from the spot; ‘to continue to do so any longer might perhaps be attended with dangerous consequences.’

Delacour and Elizabeth turned into an apartment off the gallery, Osmond followed their steps, and was advancing after them through it to an opposite door, at which they went out, when he became suddenly rivetted to the floor, by beholding Lady O’Sinister and her daughter on a sofa, at no great distance from the one by which he had entered.

Surprise for an instant took from him the power of thinking, as well as of moving. The plot which had been contrived to heighten that of Delacour, then recurred to his recollection, and, like him, he began to think he had been deceived in the present instance.

‘But should I be mistaken,’ he cried to himself, the flush of suddenly revived hope yielding to the paleness of apprehension.

Suspense was not endurable....his anxiety to terminate it restored him to the use of his faculties; he eagerly approached the ladies, who had risen the moment they caught his eye. Lady O’Sinister’s hand was extended to him; he caught it, and raised it to his lips, his looks, however, at the same moment wandering towards her daughter, who half meeting, half shunning his glance, prevented him alike from either hoping or despairing, and whose eyes at the moment, like

‘The dewy-star of evening, shone in tears.’

‘I see,’ said her Ladyship, in a voice which proclaimed her in no little emotion at the moment, ‘that your friend succeeded in imposing on you, relative to us.’

‘Imposing!’ repeated Osmond....‘Oh Madam, am I then to discredit what he told me?’

‘Why, not absolutely,’ returned Lady O’Sinister, hesitating a little, and half smiling, ‘for he doubtless told you my daughter was engaged.’

‘He did,’ said Osmond, in accents scarce articulate.

‘Well, in telling you so, he only told you what was true, for she is engaged....Yes,’ after the pause, the

agitating pause of a minute, during which her eyes were fixed upon the varying countenance of the trembling Osmond, 'she is engaged....engaged to him whom I myself selected for her....to him whose modest worth, whose virtues, whose fortitude, render him deserving of her.'

Then turning to her blushing daughter, she took her hand, and joining it with that of Osmond....'Take her, Munro,' she continued, pressing their united hands for an instant between her's....'In thus joining your hands, I fulfil the dying commands of my Lord, and accomplish my own wishes.... May Heaven shower its choicest gifts upon you, and long continue you a blessing to others, as well as to each other.'

Then dropping their hands, she covered her face with her handkerchief, and hastily retired from the room.

The transported Osmond continued for some time after she withdrew, in that state in which Bassanio described himself, on receiving from the gentle Portia an assurance of being his.

'Madam, you have bereft me of all word....
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy
Exprest, and not exprest.'

The scene that ensued between him and his fair mistress, we shall pass over in silence.

After an hour had elapsed Lady O'Sinister returned, and Miss Athelstone at her motion withdrawing, she proceeded to explain to Osmond some particulars she deemed it necessary he should know.

Her Lord, truly penitent in his last moments, she said, for all the injuries he had done him, as well as those he had meditated against his family, had, after giving his free consent to his union with his daughter, willed him *half his fortune*, in case he no longer wished for such an *alliance*.

For concealing himself from his knowledge at Accrenza, and during the perilous adventures that succeeded their departure thence, apprehension of his having discovered his conduct towards his sister, was his motive; and for slandering him in such a way to the Duke D'Amalfi, as made that nobleman anxious to get rid of him, his dread of his succeeding in his efforts to discover his daughter should he be allowed to remain in Naples.

'And now,' added she, 'this I trust is the last time his errors will ever be recalled to recollection; the sincere contrition he felt, and atonement he made for them, having, I humbly trust, expiated them in the sight of Heaven, and equally so I hope in the eyes of the world; for, as the Poet says....' He who by repentance is not satisfied, is not of heaven or earth.'....I shall no longer dwell on the painful subject, than merely to observe, his fate affords a striking proof of the fatal consequences that result from letting passion have entire dominion over us. Had he early endeavoured to curb his unhappy propensities, he might now, in all probability, have been in the full enjoyment of life, surrounded by admiring friends, and rejoicing in the prospect of his child's happiness.'

A flood of tears for a few moments impeded the utterance of Lady O'Sinister. On recovering, she proceeded to inform the sympathizing Osmond that she had arrived the preceding day at Firgrove, where, in consequence of an express she had sent to her, she was met by Mrs. Dunbar, her old and most intimate friend. By her house-keeper, she added, she had been informed of all that had lately happened at Heathwood, and by her had a private message delivered to Delacour and Osmond's father, announcing her arrival, and desiring to see them immediately. 'In this interview,' she proceeded, 'I fully explained to your father all that was requisite for him to know; and learning that your sister was to be married to-morrow, was induced to consent to my Cordelia's becoming a bride at the same time.'

'Words are inadequate,' said the enraptured Osmond, respectfully kissing her hand, 'to do justice to the gratitude with which your goodness, in this instance, as well

as in every other, has inspired me ; but it shall be my study to evince, by my actions, my sense of it. I know not, however, how I shall be able to forgive Delacour, for keeping me so long in ignorance of the happiness that was in store for me.'

'Nay, it was not his fault, I assure you, that you did not sooner learn it ; but my agitation was so great yesterday, I felt quite unequal to seeing you then.'

Her Ladyship then proceeded to inform him that her brother, Mr. Beerscroft, had accompanied her to Scotland, and that she had prevailed on Osmond's family to take up their residence with her at Firgrove, till they had succeeded in obtaining such a habitation as they now required. She completed his joy, by further stating, that just before her departure from Naples, she had the pleasure of meeting his Acerenza friends, happy as their virtues entitled them to be, and determined on visiting Great Britain the ensuing Spring, for the purpose of convincing him, neither time nor absence had occasioned any change in their sentiments for him.

Lady O'Sinister's conference with him over, she led the way to a magnificent saloon, where, besides his fair mistress, Delacour and his sister, he found the rest of his friends from Heathwood, and Mr. Beerscroft. To this gentleman he was immediately introduced by her Ladyship, as his destined nephew ; after which he received the congratulations of all present on his unexpected happiness.

An animated conversation then took place, till the party separated to dress for dinner. In the dressing room appropriated to his use, Osmond found Mactalla impatiently expecting him.

'By St. Benedict,' exclaimed he, in an exulting tone, as he closed the door to prevent his being overheard, 'one may well say now it never rains but it pours ; who could have thought of such changes ! Poor sinner ; but peace be to his soul ; they say he died a true penitent, and so let him rest for me : and now, your honour, to let you know of a little surprise of my own.'

'Well, what was it ?' asked Osmond, as he began to busy himself about his toilette.

‘Why nothing more or less than my popping upon little Bianca here.’

‘Bianca!’ repeated Osmond.

‘Yes, the granddaughter of the old men who sent us to the villa of the Duke D’Amalfi, the night you discovered Dan Alphonso in the barn.’

‘O, now I recollect,’ said Osmond.

‘Well, your honour, the old man died shortly after that, and his death leaving poor little Bianca destitute, she was forced to look out for a service. As good luck would have it, Miss Athelstone wanted a waiting-woman just at that time; and hearing of Bianca from a person belonging to the villa to which his Lordship, her father, removed her from Naples, to be out of your way, she hired her, and has brought her over with her; and travelling has not by any means, I assure you, disagreed with her; she looks prettier than ever, and if your honour has no objection to having a married man in your service, I think I shall be tempted to try my fortune with her.’

‘By all means; if you really love the pretty Bianca, and think she returns your regard, and is worthy of possessing it, delay not asking her hand; and assure yourself nothing in my power shall be wanting to contribute to your felicity. Providence has wrought a wonderful change in my situation, and the best way in which I can evince my gratitude for that change, is by endeavouring to promote the happiness of my fellow-creatures. I gladly embrace this opportunity of informing you, that your happiness is one of my first considerations. From the light in which your faithful services have made me regard you, I should always, did I consult my own wishes, desire to retain you with me; but if you think, when married, you can be happier in a residence of your own, have no hesitation in telling me, since whatever is most likely to contribute to your felicity, will ultimately be most pleasing to me.’

‘Happier elsewhere than with you!’ cried Mactalla, in a broken voice, ‘no, no, and if Miss Bianca is not content to remain in her present situation, she may retain her present name for me.’

‘ Well, my good fellow, consult her on the subject; and rely on it, let your decision be what it may, you shall be rendered independant.’

From the affecting demonstrations of poor Mactalla's gratitude he escaped as soon as possible and was speedily rejoined by the rest of the party. The remainder of the day was chiefly spent in pleasing conversation, and the following morning, at nine o'clock, Miss Athelstone and Osmond, and Delacour and Elizabeth, were united in the chapel of Firgrove; the former was given away by her uncle, and the latter by her father. The double ceremony over, Lady O'Sinister, who, on this joyful occasion, had exchanged her robe of sable for a plain white one, conducted by Mr. Munro, led the way to the apartment in which breakfast was laid out, and which, from its beauty, was perfectly calculated for a nuptial entertainment; it was fitted up in imitation of the winter green-house mentioned in the Tatler, and of which the following is a description.

The area was a hundred paces long, fifty broad, and roof thirty feet high. The wall, toward the North, was of solid stone. On the South side, and at both the ends, the stone-work rose but three feet from the ground, excepting the pilasters, placed at convenient distances, to strengthen and beautify the building; the intermediate spaces were filled up with large sashes, of the strongest and most transparent glass....The middle sash, which was wider than any of the others, served for the public entrance, to which you mounted by six easy steps, and descended on the inside by as many more. This shut and opened with greater ease, kept the wind out better, and was at the same time more uniform than folding doors.

In the middle of the roof there ran a ceiling, thirty feet broad from one end to the other; this was enlivened by a masterly pencil, with all the variety of rural scenes and prospects, which he had peopled with the whole tribe of sylvan deities. Their characters and their stories were so well expressed, that the whole seemed a collection of all the most beautiful fables of the ancient poets, translated into colours. The remaining spaces of the roof, ten feet

on each side of the ceiling, were of the clearest glass, to let in the sky and clouds from above. The building pointed full East and West, so that you might enjoy the sun while he was above the horizon. His rays were improved through the glass, and you received through it what was desirable in a winter sky, without the coarse alloy of the seasons. The greens and flowers seemed sensible of this benefit; they flourished and looked cheerful, as in the Spring, while their fellow-creatures abroad were starved to death: a very moderate expence of fire, over and above the contributions received from the sun, served to keep this large room in a due temperature, it being sheltered from the cold winds by a hill on the North, and a wood on the East.

There went through the whole length of the floor a spacious walk of the finest gravel, made to unite and bind so firmly, that it seemed one continued stone, with this advantage, that it was easier to the feet, and better for walking, than if it was what it seemed to be. At each end of the walk, on the one and on the other side of it, lay a square plat of grass, of the finest turf and brightest verdure. What ground remained on both sides, between these little smooth fields of green, was flagged with large quarries of white marble, where the blue veins traced out such a variety of irregular windings through the clear surface, that these bright plains seemed full of rivulets and streaming meanders. This, to the eye that delighted in simplicity, was inexpressibly more beautiful than the chequered floors, which are in general so much admired. Upon the right and upon the left, along the gravel walk, were ranged interchangeably, the bay, the myrtle, the orange, and the lemon-trees, intermixed with painted hollies, silver firs, and pyramids of yew, all so disposed, that every tree received an additional beauty from its situation; besides the harmony that rose from the disposition of the whole, no shade cut too strongly, or broke in harshly on the other, but the eye was cheered with a mild, rather than a gorgeous diversity of greens.

The borders of the four grass plats were garnished with pots of flowers, those delicacies of nature which re-

create two senses at once, and leave such delightful and gentle impressions on the brain, that they may be reckoned of equal force with the softest airs of music towards smoothing our tempers. In the center of every plat was a statue; the figures made choice of were a Venus, an Adonis, a Diana, and an Apollo, such excellent copies, as raised the same delight that would have been drawn from the sight of the ancient originals.

The North wall would have been but a tiresome waste to the eye, if it had not been diversified with the most lively ornaments suitable to the place. To this intent a large sum was expended, to lead over arches from a neighbouring hill, a plentiful store of spring-water, which a beautiful Naiad, placed as high as possible in the center of the wall, poured from out an urn. This, by a fall of above twenty feet, made a most delightful cascade into a bason, that opened wide within the marble floor at that side. At a reasonable distance on either hand the cascade, the wall was hollowed into two spreading scallops, each of which received a couch of green velvet, and formed at the same time a canopy over them. Next to them were two large aviaries, likewise let into the stone; these were succeeded by two grottoes, set off with all the pleasing rudeness of shells and moss, and cragged stones, imitating in miniature, rocks and precipices, the most dreadful and gigantic works of nature. After the grottoes were two niches, the one inhabited by Ceres, with her sickle and sheaf of wheat; and the other by Pomona, who, with a countenance full of good cheer, poured out of her horn a bounteous Autumn of fruits. Last of all came two colonies of bees, whose stations being East and West, the one was saluted by the rising, the other by the setting sun. These, all of them being placed at proper intervals, furnished out the whole length of the wall; the spaces that lay between were painted *al fresco*, by the same hand that enriched the ceiling.

In this delightful spot, which it was scarcely possible to enter without feeling the spirits revived, and a sweet complacency diffused over the mind; not to be wondered at, when 'tis considered that here the music of falling waters, the symphony of birds, the gentle humming of bees, the breath of flowers, the fine imagery of painting

and sculpture, in a word, the beauties and charms of nature and of art, courted all the faculties, refreshed the fibres of the brain, and smoothed every avenue of thought; it was here that the young bridal folks received the first congratulations of their friends on their marriage....a marriage which their mutual love bid fair to render productive of all the happiness they merited.

‘O happy love, where love like this is found;
 O heart-felt raptures, bliss beyond compare,
 I’ve paced much this weary mortal round,
 And Sage *Experience* bids me this declare...
 If heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
 One cordial in this melancholy vale,
 ’Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
 In other’s arms, breathe out the tender tale,
 Beneath the milk white thorn that scents the ev’ning gale.

Previous to this happy day Don Alphonso had made a disposition of his property, and given to each of his grand-children a fortune suitable to their birth.

Soon after breakfast the grateful heart of Munro led him back to his late residence at Heathwood, for the purpose of putting Stubbs in possession of it. He had appointed the honest rustic and his wife, but without hinting to them why, to meet him there, and was accompanied, at his particular request, by his father-in-law, his son, Delacour, and Mr. Beerscroft.

Leading the way into the parlour, he motioned Stubbs and his dame, who received him in the hall, to follow. On their obeying, he took the farmer by the hand.

‘Farmer,’ said he, ‘’tis at length given me to evince, by something more than words, the gratitude I owe you. The friends by whom we are now surrounded know the obligations I am under to you; they know that many of the sorrowful hours I latterly passed beneath this roof, were divested of their bitterness through your means; that for any little comfort either I or mine lately enjoyed, we were solely, indebted to your kindness. Henceforward consider this house as your’s; and not only it, but all within and appertaining to it, for ever. I give it to you, in the full persuasion that it will still, as heretofore, afford a refuge to the houseless child of want; that still, as in former times, its gate will readily open to the afflicted and the way-faring. Necessity, I know, obliged you to

send your family from you, but that exists no longer; collect them without delay, and let the evening of your days be spent in the enjoyment of that domestic felicity, to which the industry, honesty, and benevolence that distinguished their morning so justly entitle you.... Mrs. Stubbs, turning from the astonished farmer to his equally astonished wife, and presenting her his hand, 'I should deem myself very remiss, if I did not also avail myself of this opportunity to thank you for the kind attentions my family and I received from you. Long, long,' uniting the rough and sun-burnt hands of the honest rustics, and pressing them for a few minutes between his, 'long, long,' with fervour he added, 'may you and your husband be spared to each other; hand in hand may ye descend into the vale of life together; may you live to see your children's children rejoicing around you; and when from this world translated to a better, may a race as virtuous as yourselves attend you to your last receptacle'.... Then dropping their hands, he rushed from the room, overpowered by emotion.

'Amen!' exclaimed Don Alphonso to what he had just said, but in a voice scarce articulate, and dropping at their feet a rich and heavy purse.

'Noa, noa,' cried the sobbing farmer, instantly picking it up, and following him; 'noa, noa, trying to force it upon him: 'if you do not all wish to break my heart out-right by your kindness, you'll take this back.'

'Nay,' said Osmond, interposing, 'you must not refuse my grandfather; he means that purse to defray the expences of a housewarming, which we must have here as soon as your children arrive.'

'Yes,' rejoined Delacour, 'and I bespeak the hand of your daughter for the first dance; so say no more on the subject, farmer, but do you and your dame,' slapping him on the shoulder, 'make haste and smarten yourselves to come down to the Hall, for I assure you, we shall take it much amiss if the healths of the brides at least are not drank there by you.'

'Well, well, if it must be,' said Stubbs, heaving a deep sigh, indicative of the fulness of his heart, 'why it must; but to be sure, I can't help thinking myself in a dream! The party now quitted the house, the bridegrooms

impatient to rejoin their lovely brides, and the other gentlemen convinced that till left to themselves, the honest couple would not be able to regain any degree of composure.

A surprise of a very unexpected nature awaited their return to the Hall. Munro's last letter to Glengary, announcing the happy revolution in his circumstances, and Elizabeth's consequent rejection of Sir James, reached it too late, owing to an accident his messenger met with on the road, to prevent his step-dame from sending the housekeeper to Heathwood, to make preparations for the return of its owners, according to a promise she had made to that effect, in consequence of her wishing to do something likely to lessen Elizabeth's prejudice to her, with whom, from the moment she looked forward to her becoming the wife of the Baronet, her selfish policy made her anxious to stand well.

Mrs. M'Tullough, or more properly Mrs. O'Grady, having, about this time, given herself a right to the latter appellation, by accepting the hand of Sir Patrick Dunboyne's valet, of whom the united attractions of her person and purse, both of a weighty description, had made a compleat conquest, could not have been sent upon a more agreeable errand, since affording her an opportunity of again seeing Munro, to whom and his family she was sincerely attached.

She was accompanied from Glengary by her husband, partly to please himself, and partly his master, Sir Patrick, then confined there by a severe fit of the gout, and whose solicitude for intelligence of his nephew made him anxious to send some one to him, on whose account he could depend, and also old Andrew, in order that he might have the pleasure of clapping his een once more upon his young master, as he still persisted in calling the discarded heir of Glengary.

At the little inn in the village, where they thought proper to alight, these good folks heard of the happy change which had taken place in the fortunes of Munro, and the marriage of his son and daughter. Instead, therefore, of proceeding to his recent habitation, they repaired straight to the Hall; and so delighted did they

send your family from you, but that exists no longer; collect them without delay, and let the evening of your days be spent in the enjoyment of that domestic felicity, to which the industry, honesty, and benevolence that distinguished their morning so justly entitle you....Mrs. Stubbs, turning from the astonished farmer to his equally astonished wife, and presenting her his hand, 'I should deem myself very remiss, if I did not also avail myself of this opportunity to thank you for the kind attentions my family and I received from you. Long, long,' uniting the rough and sun-burnt hands of the honest rustics, and pressing them for a few minutes between his, 'long, long,' with fervour he added, 'may you and your husband be spared to each other; hand in hand may ye descend into the vale of life together; may you live to see your childrens' children rejoicing around you; and when from this world translated to a better, may a race as virtuous as yourselves attend you to your last receptacle'.... Then dropping their hands, he rushed from the room, overpowered by emotion.

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appear at the happiness they there witnessed, and so anxious to remain a short time spectators of it, that Lady O'Sinister invited them to remain till the ensuing day....an invitation they joyfully accepted. This led to another surprise. On the party below assembling to dinner, which, in honour of the day, was scarcely inferior to that which had been served above, Mrs. O'Grady, after a little conversation with him, discovered, in Mactalla, the son of an only and beloved brother, who had quitted his native country, many years back, with an officer belonging to the Irish brigades in France, and of whom she had long, though vainly, been seeking intelligence. Her happiness was unspeakable; as to that of Mactalla, the happy change in the affairs of his master's family rendered him, at the moment, scarcely capable of addition. All the addition, however, it was capable of, it received from the discovery of his near relationship to so creditable a woman as appearance led him to believe Mrs. O'Grady, and the assurance she gave him of making him her heir, if not blessed with a family of her own, having, previous to her marriage, stipulated that she should have her property at her own disposal.

In spite of her joy, however, at discovering him, Mrs. O'Grady could not help being vexed at the alteration that had taken place in the orthography of his name; but quickly ceased to be so, on Mactalla's assuring her, on her speaking to him on the subject, that in future he should take care to spell it exactly as their ancient family did; and that it was not his fault, neither the fault of his father, that the alteration she so much disapproved of had taken place, but entirely owing to the ignorance of the Marchesa Morati, who, from never having been in Ireland, and knowing nothing of the language, neither knew how to spell or pronounce an Irish name properly.

'Well, well, my darling boy,' cried his overjoyed aunt, again clasping him in her arms, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks, 'no matter, no matter, since the foreigners did nothing worse to you than alter your name, I am satisfied.'

'With the leave of the present good company,' said Farmer Stubbs, who with his dame had been invited to this entertainment, addressing himself to Mactalla, &c.

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'By St. Benedict, no; I kept it in store till my return: but come, I can travel no further without another glass of wine, and to give it a zest, I'll give you a bit of a toast....May the new married couples above have each a living likeness of themselves before this time twelvemonth, and may somebody,' glancing at Bianca, 'that shall be nameless, be shortly as happy as they are.'

'Ah!' exclaimed old Andrew, as he wiped away the tears with which joy suffused his eyes, 'you are a cantie cheel, Mr. Mac, and put me in mind of my ain youthfu' days.'

send your family from you, but that exists no longer; collect them without delay, and let the evening of your days be spent in the enjoyment of that domestic felicity, to which the industry, honesty, and benevolence that distinguished their morning so justly entitle you.... Mrs. Stubbs, turning from the astonished farmer to his equally astonished wife, and presenting her his hand, 'I should deem myself very remiss, if I did not also avail myself of this opportunity to thank you for the kind attentions my family and I received from you. Long, long,' uniting the rough and sun-burnt hands of the honest rustics, and pressing them for a few minutes between his, 'long, long,' with fervour he added, 'may you and your husband be spared to each other; hand in hand may ye descend into the vale of life together; may you live to see your children's children rejoicing around you; and when from this world translated to a better, may a race as virtuous as yourselves attend you to your last receptacle'.... Then dropping their hands, he rushed from the room, overpowered by emotion.

'Amen!' exclaimed Don Alphonso to what he had just said, but in a voice scarce articulate, and dropping at their feet a rich and heavy purse.

'Noa, noa,' cried the sobbing farmer, instantly picking it up, and following him; 'noa, noa, trying to force it upon him: 'if you do not all wish to break my heart outright by your kindness, you'll take this back.'

'Nay,' said Osmond, interposing, 'you must not refuse my grandfather; he means that purse to defray the expenses of a housewarming, which we must have here as soon as your children arrive.'

'Yes,' rejoined Delacour, 'and I bespeak the hand of your daughter for the first dance; so say no more on the subject, farmer, but do you and your dame,' slapping him on the shoulder, 'make haste and smarten yourselves to come down to the Hall, for I assure you, we shall take it much amiss if the healths of the brides at least are not drank there by you.'

'Well, well, if it must be,' said Stubbs, heaving a deep sigh, indicative of the fulness of his heart, 'why it must; but to be sure, I can't help thinking myself in a dream.'

The party now quitted the house, the bridegroom

impatient to rejoin their lovely brides, and the other gentlemen convinced that till left to themselves, the honest couple would not be able to regain any degree of composure.

A surprise of a very unexpected nature awaited their return to the Hall. Munro's last letter to Glengary, announcing the happy revolution in his circumstances, and Elizabeth's consequent rejection of Sir James, reached it too late, owing to an accident his messenger met with on the road, to prevent his step-dame from sending the housekeeper to Heathwood, to make preparations for the return of its owners, according to a promise she had made to that effect, in consequence of her wishing to do something likely to lessen Elizabeth's prejudice to her, with whom, from the moment she looked forward to her becoming the wife of the Baronet, her selfish policy made her anxious to stand well.

Mrs. M'Tullough, or more properly Mrs. O'Grady, having, about this time, given herself a right to the latter appellation, by accepting the hand of Sir Patrick Dunboyne's valet, of whom the united attractions of her person and purse, both of a weighty description, had made a compleat conquest, could not have been sent upon a more agreeable errand, since affording her an opportunity of again seeing Munro, to whom and his family she was sincerely attached.

She was accompanied from Glengary by her husband, partly to please himself, and partly his master, Sir Patrick, then confined there by a severe fit of the gout, and whose solicitude for intelligence of his nephew made him anxious to send some one to him, on whose account he could depend, and also old Andrew, in order that he might have the pleasure of clapping his een once more upon his young master, as he still persisted in calling the discarded heir of Glengary.

At the little inn in the village, where they thought proper to alight, these good folks heard of the happy change which had taken place in the fortunes of Munro, and the marriage of his son and daughter. Instead, therefore, of proceeding to his recent habitation, they repaired straight to the Hall; and so delighted did they

appear at the happiness they there witnessed, and so anxious to remain a short time spectators of it, that Lady O'Sinister invited them to remain till the ensuing day....an invitation they joyfully accepted. This led to another surprise. On the party below assembling to dinner, which, in honour of the day, was scarcely inferior to that which had been served above, Mrs. O'Grady, after a little conversation with him, discovered, in Mactalla, the son of an only and beloved brother, who had quitted his native country, many years back, with an officer belonging to the Irish brigades in France; and of whom she had long, though vainly, been seeking intelligence. Her happiness was unspeakable; as to that of Mactalla, the happy change in the affairs of his master's family rendered him, at the moment, scarcely capable of addition. All the addition, however, it was capable of, it received from the discovery of his near relationship to so creditable a woman as appearance led him to believe Mrs. O'Grady, and the assurance she gave him of making him her heir, if not blessed with a family of her own, having, previous to her marriage, stipulated that she should have her property at her own disposal.

In spite of her joy, however, at discovering him, Mrs. O'Grady could not help being vexed at the alteration that had taken place in the orthography of his name; but quickly ceased to be so, on Mactalla's assuring her, on her speaking to him on the subject, that in future he should take care to spell it exactly as their ancient family did; and that it was not his fault, neither the fault of his father, that the alteration she so much disapproved of had taken place, but entirely owing to the ignorance of the Marchesa Morati, who, from never having been in Ireland, and knowing nothing of the language, neither knew how to spell or pronounce an Irish name properly.

'Well, well, my darling boy,' cried his overjoyed aunt, again clasping him in her arms, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks, 'no matter, no matter, since the foreigners did nothing worse to you than alter your name, I am satisfied.'

'With the leave of the present good company,' said farmer Stubbs, who with his dame had been invited to this entertainment, addressing himself to Mactalla, as

the removal of the cloth, 'you would favour us, perhaps, with an account of your adventures, for to be sure, Mr. Mac, seeing you have been abroad so long, you must know many wonderful things.'

'That I do,' cried Mactalla, drawing himself up with an air of importance, and a smile of infinite satisfaction, 'and will with pleasure, Mr. Stubbs, give you all the information you wish. To begin then....but Mr. O'Grady, the bottle stands with you; by St. Benedict, and St. Patrick too, if you don't push it about more briskly, but I shall be tempted to believe you imposed upon my good aunt here, when you told her you were an Irishman. Well, Mr. Stubbs,' he resumed, after filling his glass, 'as I was about telling you, I and my master left the castle of Acerenza, and a famous fine castle it is, one lovely fine morning; but with truth I may say, as you'll allow, by and bye, when you have heard all I have got to tell you, 'tis not always a day that opens well that ends well; many a bright morning has been succeeded by a cloudy night, and many a cloudy night by a bright morning.....But to go on with my story, without circumlocution, as they say in my country. The first place we came to after quitting the castle was a village, but would you believe it, the devil a soul was living in it! no, by the Powers, for they were all murdered alive one night, and buried in the middle of it....but stay, I forget to tell you, there was another in company with us; but if we were not hampered by having such a spalpeen with us, 'tis no matter.'

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'Ah!' exclaimed old Andrew, as he wiped away the tears with which joy suffused his eyes, 'you are a cannie cheel, Mr. Mac, and put me in mind of my own youths' days.'

‘Well, now to proceed,’ resumed Mactalla; ‘all our misfortunes were brought upon us by that devil of a French boy I just told you about. He couldn’t keep up with me and my master, and so fearing we’d give him the slip, he kept bellowing out every moment, like a young bull, that he was going to be robbed. Talk of the devil and he’ll appear, used my grandmother Norah say, and by St. Patrick she said what was right, for the robbers did come at last. A great storm coming on towards night, I and my master took refuge in a wood by the road side; and snug enough we thought ourselves, till the squalling of Monsieur discovered us to a gang of about forty thieves, that had also taken shelter there. I placed myself between them and my master and the little boy, and though only armed with a horse-whip, gave a devil of a dressing to the forty rogues, notwithstanding the swords, and pistols, and carbines, with which they were armed. I fought them a long time, still crying out to my master, as I laid about me, to have courage.’

‘What!’ interrupted Farmer Stubbs, ‘with only a whip were you able to fight and kill forty men, armed with swords and pistols?’

‘What, kill them all! no, no, with such odds against him, that would have been more than Sampson himself could have done. I think I did very well in fighting them all for an hour, and then laying fifteen of them low.’

Here a burst of laughter from honest Stubbs again broke the thread of Mr. Mactalla’s story.

‘By the powers, but you have got into a merry humour, Master Stubbs,’ cried he, after viewing him some minutes in silence; ‘I should like to know what it is has tickled your fancy so suddenly; it can’t be the tragical battle, I am sure, I have been telling you of.’

‘Why, I’ll tell you,’ said Farmer Stubbs, as soon as he was again able to speak, which was not immediately. ‘First, however,’ (looking all round him,) ‘asking pardon of this good company for interrupting you; but if I was to have been shot for it, I couldn’t help laughing at your story Mr. Mac, it so put me in mind of one I read some years ago, written by a man of the name of...of *Munchausen*; ay, that was it I think; by goles, yours is as like it as one egg is to another, only that I don’t think there are quite so many lies in yours.’

'Lies!' repeated M'Fulloch, rising from his seat; 'by the Powers, Mr. Stubbs, but this is not the language of a gentleman.'

'Come, come,' cried old Andrew, interposing, 'deil take me if there shall be any quarrelling on sic a happy day as this; come, Maister Stubbs, ye must beg Maister Mac's pardon, and then a' will gang weel again.'

This Stubbs readily did, protesting he meant no offence.

'No, to be sure,' rejoined Andrew, 'for he must be a crankous churl, which I am sartain, from your sonsie looks, you are not, Maister Stubbs, who could wish to gi' offence to a peerson who was putting their inveention to the rack to afford them amusement, as Maister Mac has been kind enough to do for us.'

Mactalla looked a little askance at this speech of old Andrew's; his natural good humour, however, soon got the better of all petulance, and to prove its ascendancy, he proposed singing some Italian airs, for the amusement of the company. His proposal was accepted; and such was the effect his quivering and shaking had upon his auditors, that in a little while several of them endeavoured to chime in with him, by each trying to adapt a song in their own language to the Italian air he favoured them with.

Old Andrew chose....'Green grow the rushes, O;'
Farmer Stubbs....'Chevy Chace;'
and Mr. O'Grady and his lady....'Ellen a Roon.'

That the harmony their united exertions produced was of the most delightful nature, we shall not pretend to assert; such as it was, however, they were perfectly satisfied with it.

Their vocal was at length interrupted by instrumental music from an adjoining hall, in which by the command of the lady of the mansion, an entertainment was provided for the principal tenants, whilst the others were feasted at the inn in the village.

The mortification of Watkins on this occasion was such as to induce him to seclude himself from every eye; and shortly after resolve on quitting a place where his conduct to a worthy man had rendered him hateful to all.

The gentlemen looked in upon the happy party below and for a short time the bridegrooms mingled with the

dancers, of whom Mr. Mac, as he was generally styled, was the most conspicuous. As he had before charmed and amazed by his singing, so did he now by his dancing; but with such grand requisites as he was in possession of for dancing well, namely, a light heart and light heels, it was not surprising he should excel in this accomplishment.

Most unwillingly did Mr. and Mrs. O'Grady and old Andrew set off the next morning for Glengary. Munro, however, determined never intentionally to give any one reason to complain of him, would not understand the hints they threw out, of their readiness to exchange his father's service for his. He did not, however, permit them to depart without receiving substantial proofs of the gratitude he felt for their long and disinterested attachment to him, neither without a letter to Sir Patrick, thanking him for the place he had allowed him to retain in his remembrance; and entreating him, as soon as he was sufficiently recovered to be able to travel, to favour him with a visit, and, if agreeable, take up his residence in future with him.

Happy in the society of each other, the party at Firgrove neither wished nor thought of separating, when about a week after Munro and his family had become inmates of it, an express arrived from Sir Patrick, to inform him of the sudden death of his father, just after the old gentleman, in consequence of hearing of the change that had taken place in his circumstances, had destroyed a will made agreeably to the wishes of Mrs. Munro, and avowed a determination of being again on good terms with him.

Upon this intelligence Munro lost no time in setting out for Glengary, accompanied by his son and son-in-law. Their arrival so immediately after the decease of its late owner, was neither expected, (Sir Patrick having given her no intimation of the express he had dispatched to Heathwood) nor yet desired by the fair relict, as it prevented the removal of certain valuables she had taken a particular fancy to, and which, from conceiving employment the best antidote against sorrow, she had busied herself in selecting and packing up, almost from the moment of her husband's death.

Compelled by the arrival of the heir to see these restored to their usual places, her rage and mortification knew no bounds, and in a paroxysm of passion she quitted the house, though informed by Munro, that out of respect to the memory of his father, he should make no objection to her remaining in it, till she had provided herself with a suitable residence elsewhere.

We should here drop her entirely, but that we wish, as far as is in our power, to prove that there are but few instances of vice not sooner or later meeting with punishment in this life. From the neighbourhood of Glengary, to which she soon after bid a final adieu, convinced, from her perfect consciousness of the impropriety of her conduct, that in losing the title of its mistress, she had lost all that had ever obtained, or could obtain her the notice of its inhabitants, she repaired to Edinburgh, where the property she was possessed of gave her such charms in the eyes of a professional gentleman there, as induced him to solicit her hand, very shortly after they became acquainted, and which under the idea of his being deeply enamoured of her, and in possession of a handsome fortune, she had no great hesitation in bestowing on him.

Scarcely, however, was the nuptial knot tied, ere she had convincing proofs of being mistaken in both suppositions: regret and repentance followed the conviction....but a regret and repentance which neither excited sympathy, nor yet amended her own heart.

Munro was too well remembered in the neighbourhood of Glengary for a general joy not to pervade it, at his succeeding to the inheritance of his forefathers....a joy which, but for propriety, would have been publicly manifested, on his arriving to take possession.

In about six weeks after the death of his father, he found himself comfortably settled with his family at Glengary.—Their arrival was welcomed by those rejoicings which decorum in the first instance had prohibited; and for which, his health and Mrs. Munro's being by this time perfectly re-established, there was nothing to prevent their making suitable returns. But in doing this they did not confine their attentions entirely to their fashionable and wealthy neighbours; benevolence, as well as

hospitality, again took up its abode at Glengary; and whilst the jocund guest laughed o'er the sparkling bowl, in the richly ornamented saloon, and in the trophied halls, blazing with innumerable lights, youths and virgins led off the dance, the humbler apartments re-echoed with the voice of rustic mirth, and the grateful effusions of relieved distress; in a word, the mansion became what it had formerly been....

'A refuge to the neighbouring poor,
And stranger led astray.'

His natural stock of pity, encreased by the sufferings he had himself undergone, his own experience of what it was to eat the bitter bread, and drink the baleful cup of misery, Munro never neglected an opportunity of administering to the wants of his fellow-creatures. On the contrary, he was eager in his search after objects of distress, and was still aided in the luxury of doing good by his family.

The residence of Don Alphonso was fixed for life with his daughter. An elegant and extensive suit of apartments was appropriated to his use at Glengary, communicating, by means of a spacious conservatory, lined with costly exotics, and at all times furnishing a pleasant walk, with a small gothic building, containing a chapel, and apartments for a priest.

Here also Sir Patrick, after a little struggle between pride and inclination, consented at length, at the earnest request of his nephew and niece, to pitch his tent, as long as poor *Poulsalough* remained at nurse.

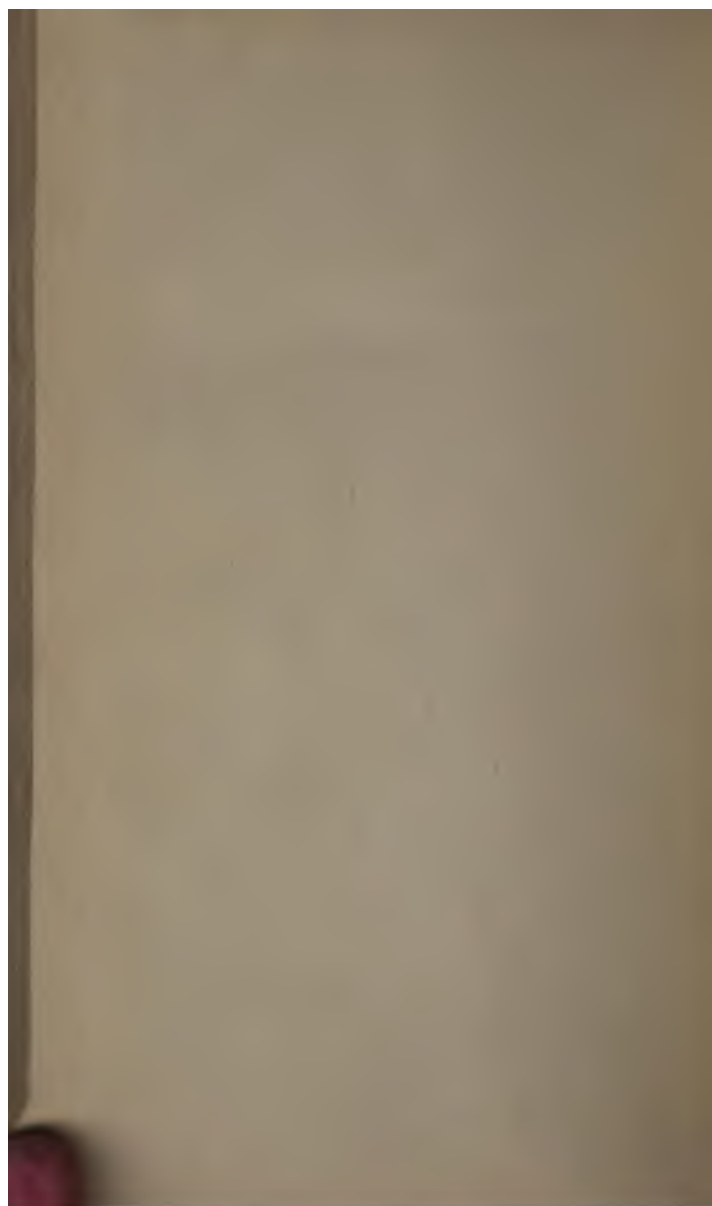
Delacour and Elizabeth, at the earnest request of Mrs. Dunbar, who having no nearer relative than him, avowed her intention of making him her heir, fixed their residence at Black Crag. Lady O'Sinister was seldom long absent from that or Glengary, losing, in the contemplation of the happiness she beheld the inmates of each enjoying, the keen remembrance of past sorrows, and together with them affording a striking proof, that....

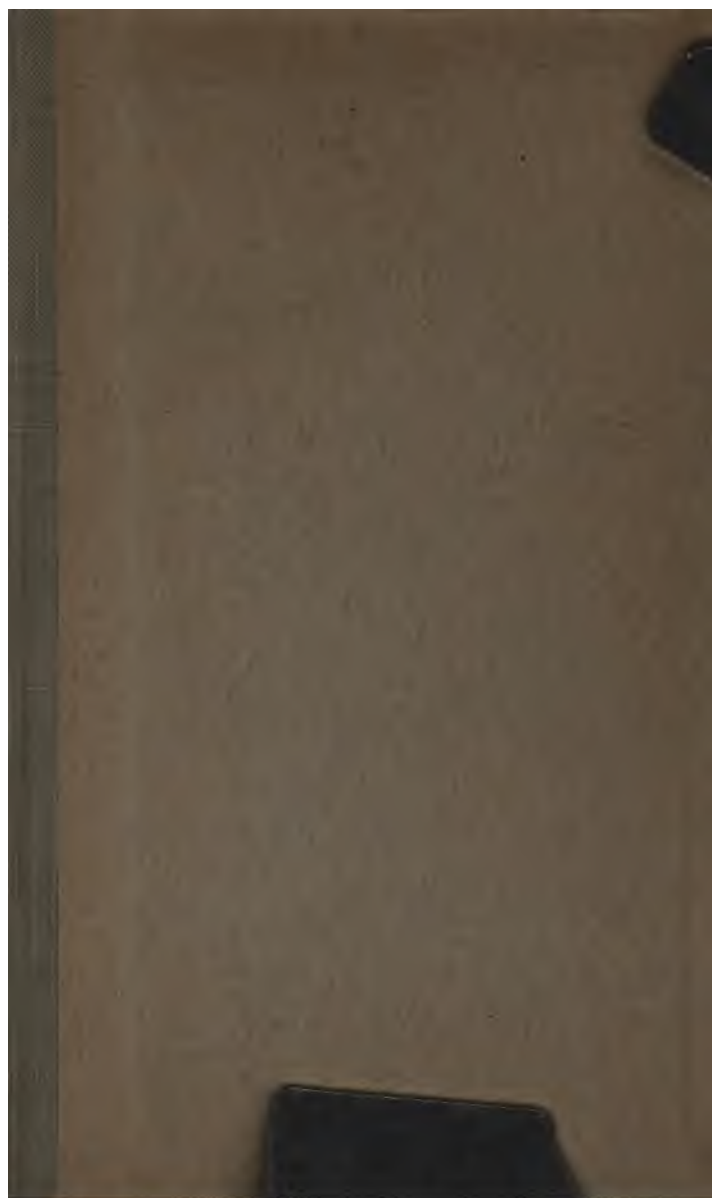
'Blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.'

FINIS.

Wm. A. D.

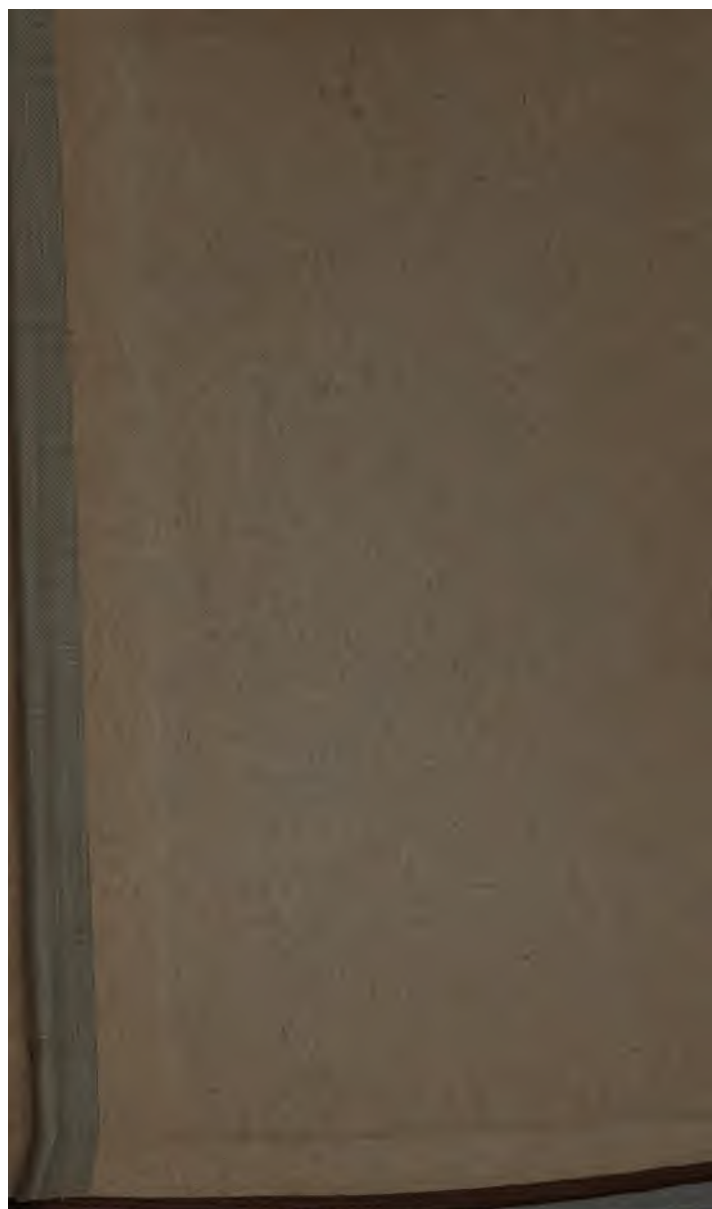






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Form 410



the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age is expected to increase from 1.1 billion to 1.5 billion.

As the world's population grows, the demand for food and other resources will increase. This will put pressure on the environment and on the world's food supply.

One way to meet this demand is to increase the amount of land that is used for agriculture. This can be done by clearing more land for farming or by using more land for grazing.

Another way to meet this demand is to increase the amount of food that is produced on the land that is already being used. This can be done by using more fertilizers and pesticides or by using more advanced farming techniques.

There are many ways to increase the world's food supply. It is important that we find ways to do this that do not harm the environment or the people who live on the land.

One way to do this is to use more sustainable farming practices. This means using fertilizers and pesticides that do not harm the environment and using farming techniques that do not deplete the soil.

Another way to do this is to use more advanced farming techniques. This means using more sophisticated machinery and more advanced irrigation systems.

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